



U.S. Department of  
Transportation

# Coordination of Rural Public Transportation Services in Three Southeastern States

June 1990



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# **Coordination of Rural Public Transportation Services in Three Southeastern States**

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Final Report  
June 1990

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

The present report contains the results and findings of a three state study of coordination among Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), United States Department of Transportation Section 18 providers of public transportation and United States Department of Health and Human Service (USDHHS) funded providers of human service client transportation. This study examined coordinated Section 18 providers in the three southeastern states of Alabama, Georgia and North Carolina. Additionally, state level efforts at coordination are also examined. The study attempts to document the development and current practices of these coordinated systems in the hope that other operators of Section 18 systems may see avenues for implementing coordination techniques which stem from the experience of these Section 18 operators. Hence, the study tends to focus upon the process of obtaining a coordinated result.

### Research Methodology

The research design adopted by the study was that of in-depth site visit case study. This approach permitted the capturing of large amounts of detailed information and of some of the subtle personal interactions which are often so critical to the success or failure of the process examined. Secondary documents such as Transportation Development Plans were also examined where available. State level executive orders, where applicable, which established state level coordinating bodies were also examined and are reproduced in the appendices to the report.

The study examined three coordinated systems in Alabama, two in Georgia and three in North Carolina. As befits a field with no single definition of coordination, each system studied reveals differences in approach and in result. Yet, all can be termed coordinated systems.

State level efforts at coordination are also examined in each of the three case study states. Alabama and North Carolina operate under executive orders mandating a level of coordination and both have interagency review bodies which examine requests for transportation funding from the member agencies. Georgia does not appear to have a functioning state level coordinating body.

In general, the case study sites were selected based upon the recommendations of the appropriate state transportation department. Hence, these systems should be considered as among the best examples of coordination in each of the respective states. However, they should not be taken as the only examples of well coordinated systems in these states. North Carolina, for example, has a longer history of state level encouragement of coordinated transportation. Thus, this case study state had numerous systems from which to select.

The case study systems were selected with an eye to providing a range of service delivery types and circumstances. Additionally, since coordination comes in a number of forms, an effort was made to capture several of these manifestations of coordination among the case study systems. Thus, three multi-county systems and five single county systems are included in the study. Of these, several represent consolidated programs while others represent coordination by various forms of purchase of service agreements.

### Coordination

A key term in the present study is coordination. Yet, no single widely accepted definition has emerged from the literature or from the field of practice. Coordination is more of a concept with particular goals rather than a technique which can be readily placed into practice.

The goals of coordination are service delivery goals, financial goals and rider service goals. Political goals may also be relevant but are normally served by meeting the first sets of goals.

Unfortunately, the three primary goals noted above are not of equal weight in all locations. Service delivery and rider service goals do appear to be the predominate goals in practice although financial goals are often the most commonly thought of objective. In some cases reported in this study, a coordinated system was developed even though it was known or suspected that it would be more expensive than the existing situation. In others, the coordinated service permitted more service at the same total system costs. While in others, coordination simply slowed the rate of increase in costs.

With these somewhat variable overall financial results, the goals which seem most consistent across the case study systems are the service oriented goals. These goals are those of improved service to riders, measured in wait times, transit times and availability of service; improved vehicle capacity

utilization; lower costs per passenger trip; and higher passengers per trip. These improved service results can be achieved through a variety of institutional arrangements which can all be termed coordination.

For the purposes of the present discussion, the variety of coordination formats is broken into three broad types:

\* Coordination I: Institutional Ridesharing

Under this approach, transportation service providers continue to operate independent systems but purchase service for particular riders from each other. In this manner duplication of vehicles with empty seats serving the same route is eliminated, even though the duplication of vehicles may not be eliminated. To illustrate, two agencies may operate vehicles over the same routing at the same time of day. One agency has empty seats while the other has excess demand. The second agency may operate a second vehicle or purchase another vehicle with a large seating capacity. Absent any coordination, the additional vehicle/larger vehicle approach would be selected if service is to be provided. Under this coordination approach, the second agency purchases service or a ticket for particular passengers to ride the first agency's vehicle (the one with the empty seats).

A variation on this approach is for the agencies involved to divide up geographic areas with each operating routes for all agencies' clients in their designated geographic area, thus purchasing service from each other. The MATS (Decatur, Alabama) system case study approximates the variant of this approach.

\* Coordination II: Purchase of Service Contracts

This approach is what is most commonly thought of as coordination. In this approach, one agency purchases a block of service from another agency. Only the selling agency owns and operates transportation equipment. The most common form of this method of coordination is for the human service agency to purchase service for all of its clients from the local Section 18 operator.

A variant of this is for the human service agency to continue to operate some service but to purchase transportation beyond its in-house capacity from the Section 18 operator.

What distinguishes this approach from the third approach is that this view does not require the human service agency to be providing transportation services in any formal method prior to purchasing the service from the Section 18 operator. Nor does it require the human service agency that is operating service to cease offering that service. The Gainesville, Georgia case study illustrates this approach.

\* Coordination III: Consolidation

This variant involves the combining of all of the relevant transportation into a single provider, normally a Section 18 operator. Under this approach, human service agencies previously providing transportation services transfer their vehicles and their direct operating control to the consolidated transportation agency.

While this approach has clear administrative cost reduction advantages, it also generates the strongest problems with turfism. Additionally, it is often the first approach many in transportation think of when the term coordination is utilized. The KARTS (Henderson, North Carolina) system case study illustrates this approach.

Thus, when this study refers to coordination, it is referring to set of generally accepted efficiency goals and the particular type of coordination which a given location has selected to meet those generally accepted efficiency goals as well as any specific local goals that may exist. No attempt will be made to suggest a single definition of coordination. Nor will any attempt be made to suggest that any one form of coordination is inherently superior to any other form.

Given the apparent lack of precision in the above approach, how, then, does one evaluate the success or non-success of a coordinated system? The only viable approach which allows for the different variations in the nature of coordination is to examine the system within its own context, i.e., within its own definition of coordination, and, then, to compare the actual performance to what could reasonable be achievable given the contextual situation.

Once that is accomplished, a second level of evaluation then becomes possible. Given the situation and the existing rate of potential fulfillment, other coordination approaches can be suggested should they offer the possibility of a higher potential fulfillment level.

Barriers To Coordination

Even though there is no single clear definition of coordination, there exist a variety of lists of barriers to achieving coordination, however it is actually defined in practice. As all of the study states are in UMTA Region IV, it seems appropriate that the Barriers to Coordination identified by the Region IV Transportation Consortium are noted herein.

The Consortium initially identified fourteen barriers to coordination. After additional review and consideration, the Consortium reclassified five of the barriers as issues of concern rather than barriers per se. The final barrier and issue of concern listing is noted below along with a brief explanation of the topic. Not all of these barriers and issues are of equal importance to each state in Region IV.

Region IV Transportation Consortium Barriers to Coordination and Issues of Concern:

## Barriers:

- 1) Human Service Programs Lack Full Allocation and Identification of Costs of Client Transportation Services

Since most human service agencies do not identify the fully allocated costs of client transportation, most do not know what total transportation expenditures are and, hence, cannot compare costs of direct provision with the price of a purchase of service agreement.

- 2) Head Start Coordination with Transportation Services

Since Head Start programs are directly funded by the federal government with no state government role, any state level coordination mechanism does not embrace the Head Start Programs.

- 3) Educating Local Elected Officials

Local elected officials often do not understand the efficiency gains to be obtained from coordination and their support is often necessary to obtain a coordinated program.

4) Resolution of Barriers Involving Multiple Federal/State Agencies

Communications are complicated by the sheer number of funding agencies at the federal and state level.

5) Need Funding for Coordinated Public Transportation Planning Activities

Currently inadequate planning funds are available to support comprehensive coordination plan development.

6) Lack of Flexibility within HHS and UMTA Transportation Programs

Real or perceived barriers to coordination arise from various legislative and regulatory statements or from their interpretation.

7) HHS Ridership Verification Versus Fixed Price Purchase of Service Contract

The accounting and paperwork requirements of certain HHS programs have produced burdens on public transportation providers which have often resulted in a lack of interest in coordination.

8) Medicaid Freedom of Choice

When Medicaid transportation is a program expense, the ability of clients to select from the full range of available transportation alternatives reduces the productivity advantages of consolidating Medicaid transportation with a single provider.

9) Title III Pooling Limitations

Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, states that: "...funds appropriated under this title may be used to purchase transportation services for older individuals and may be pooled with funds made available the provision of transportation services under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, in Titles XIX and XX of the Social Security Act." The interpretation that pooling may only be done with these three sources of funds constitutes a barrier to coordination.

## Issues of Concern:

## 1) Unrestricted Federal Match of Section 9 Funds

Under Section 18, other federal funds may be used to match Section 18 federal funds. As small urbanized areas grow from Section 18 status to small Section 9 status, they lose this matching ability. However, many of them do not gain another source of matching funds.

## 2) Uniform Safety Standards

Agency concerns regarding passenger safety may produce an impediment to coordination in specific locations.

## 3) Section 9 Funding of State Administrative Coordination Activities

Presently Section 9 funds cannot be used to support state level management of the Section 9 program. This has often produced state support staffs of limited size that do not have adequate time to support coordination activities.

## 4) Section 16(b)(2) Coordination

The restrictions on the granting of Section 16(b)(2) funds may limit the role these vehicles can play in a coordinated transportation program.

## 5) Passenger Assistance Training

Many agencies believe that only their personnel can render proper passenger assistance to their clients. These agencies often cite the lack of sensitivity on the part of public transportation personnel as a barrier to coordination.

Summary Comments

Thus, the present study examines transportation coordination in three states while fully acknowledging that there is no clear definition of precisely what is being studied. Despite this limitation, the study results do provide insights and techniques for achieving various forms of coordination between human service transportation and public transportation services. Flowing from the case study results

are three broad classifications of coordination which are illustrated by the case studies.

A set of barriers to coordination has been provided as background information. While no detailed discussion of these Barriers is provided, the existence of many of these in the subsequent case studies will be observed. Where they have been overcome, the techniques which were utilized are noted in the case study.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The objectives of the present review of the literature are not to provide a detailed recounting of the works in the field of coordinated public transportation. Rather, they are to indicate the major findings of the existing body of knowledge and to indicate those areas where the current research makes a contribution to filling gaps in the literature.

Even though the literature appears extensive (see Bibliography), this rather impressive body of knowledge tends to repeat similar themes and to produce similar findings. Practically all sources speak of the benefits of coordination, of the various degrees of coordination and of the difficulties of realizing coordination. A useful early work notes several barriers to coordination including those that arise from administrative, planning and labor sources (Revis: U.S. Department of Transportation, 1978). Some specify the steps to be taken in realizing a coordinated system (Applied Resources Intergration, Ltd., 1980a, 1980b; Carter-Goble, 1979; Teixeira in U.S. Department of Transportation, 1978 and Eastin in U.S. Department of Transportation, 1978). Others discuss federal barriers to coordination (Comptroller General 1977; Burkhardt, Knapp and Ransdell, 1980; Cutler and Knapp, 1979, American Public Welfare Association, n.d.; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1980; etc.) While these studies generally find few regulatory barriers, most note the existence of statutory barriers. However, all conclude that the barriers are surmountable. Generally, these studies recommend more interdepartmental coordination at the federal level.

Far fewer studies address state level barriers or policies (Urban Transportation Planning Associates, 1979; Institute for Public Transportation (New York State), 1978). Another study has inventoried state coordination efforts (Social Services Research Institute, n.d.). Again, these studies indicate that barriers are surmountable and generally recommend more state level coordination of state administration of the programs involved. These are very similar to the recommendations made concerning the need for coordination of departmental activities at the federal level.

While not a research study, per se, the member states of the Region IV Transportation Consortium (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Puerto Rico) adopted a list of ten prioritized barriers to coordination of services. This listing focuses upon barriers which are amenable to federal action. These barriers were noted in Chapter One of this report (Region IV Consortium, 1987).

A 1989 study (Prater, et.al.) noted various barriers to coordination in four southeastern states. This study ranked the importance of particular barriers by respondent role: DOT personnel, HHS personnel or service provider. In all cases, the barriers received different rankings with the service providers generally ranking federal regulations, differences in nature of operations and differences in management style as less important barriers than the DOT or HHS personnel. Service providers tended to rank insurance cost and administrative policies as more important barriers to coordination than did DOT or HHS personnel.

A 1984 survey of the fifty states (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 1984) compiled state-by-state data on programs for coordination of UMTA Section 18 and UMTA Section 16(b)(2) programs. But it did not inquire as to coordination of UMTA programs with programs receiving funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Many studies of demonstration projects of existing coordinated systems have been made (Burkhardt, 1980; Ketola, 1979; Cutler and Knapp, 1979; Burkhardt, Knapp and Ramsdell, 1980; McKnight, Pagano and Robin, 1982; Dooley, 1983; Crain and Hudson, 1980). While these studies generally speak favorably of the benefits of coordination, they do show some differences on the nature of the benefits. Some speak of the cost savings while others speak of increased total costs which are balanced by increased service provision and improved service quality. These studies frequently note the need for technical assistance (Burkhardt, Knapp and Ramsdell, 1980) but do not evaluate the quality of the technical assistance available.

The difficulties of obtaining coordination agreements receives widespread comment, especially the problems of "turfism" (Cutler and Knapp, 1979; Saltzman, 1980; among others). However, little attention, if any, is devoted to the process and the specifics of overcoming these problems.

Conferees at the First UMTA AoA National Conference on Transportation for the Elderly and Handicapped recommended that the U.S. Congress mandate the coordination of federal funds for transportation and that state coordination be mandated by the various states (Ecosometrics, Inc., 1985). Several years later the participants at the service coordination session of the Seventh National Conference on Rural Public Transportation recommended that coordination not be mandated at the local level but should be encouraged (Ecosometrics, Inc., 1987). Thus, whether or not coordination should be a required or an encouraged activity shows some variation through time. There

does not appear to be any general concensus on this time topic in the literature.

Meanwhile, the literature continues to note the need for coordination at the state level of state level activities (Hosen, 1984; Cutler and Knapp, 1979; Urban Transportation and Planning Associates, 1979; Sharpe, 1982) but discussions and evaluations of actual state level efforts are not usually found.

These comments persist even though many, if not most, states now have formal coordination plans/policies (North Carolina State Management Plan, 1984; Executive Order 26 (North Carolina), 1978; Georgia Management Plan, 1984; Florida Statutes Chapter 41: Coordinating Council on the Transportation Disadvantaged; Alabama Executive Order No. 29, 1989). The results of the plans have been mixed but the results have not been evaluated and incorporated into the existing literature. (See also: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 1984, for a listing from the AASHTO fifty state survey with respect to coordination of UMTA funded programs).

The 1987 study by the Council of State Governments, Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, Coordinating Rural Transit, summarizes the results of the AASHTO, 1984 survey with respect to organizational forms for coordination of UMTA Section 18 and Section 16(b)(2) programs and then examines coordination activities in the states of Florida and Iowa. This study also cites various barriers to coordination at the federal, state and local levels of government. However, these are barriers to coordination of UMTA programs rather than coordination of UMTA and HHS programs. This study also has an extensive bibliography.

Thus, the need for more detailed examination of programs for the coordination of services and funding provided by the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Health and Human Services continues to exist. It is hoped that the present examination of the topic in three states will provide some meaningful insights into alternative approaches to providing that coordination at the state and local levels of government.



## CHAPTER THREE: THE ALABAMA CASE STUDY

### Introduction

This document reports the results of the site visits to systems in the State of Alabama as well as the activities occurring on the state level in Alabama. The state level activities are reviewed first, followed by the results of three site visits and the conclusions and implications drawn there from.

### State Level Activities

Until recently, state level coordination among human service providers of transportation and UMTA funded transportation providers was very limited and lacked a formal structure. On April 28, 1989, Alabama Governor Guy Hunt signed Executive Order No. 29 which formed the Alabama Interagency Transportation Review Committee (AITRC). Prior to this, the only coordination mandate in Alabama was the federal mandate that is contained in Section 18 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 as amended. The AITRC is examined in greater detail at the end of the discussion of state level activities.

Two background points should be made before the discussion begins. First, in Alabama there are no state funds for public transportation. Hence, all matching funds (both capital and operating match) must be raised locally for both Section 18 and Section 9 systems. Second, rural public transportation programs in Alabama often have a welfare image as their ridership tends to be concentrated in human service clients. This image has complicated efforts to obtain state funding from the state legislature and it can discourage general public ridership. However, the human service rider has also often been the key base element which has permitted the development of the rural system to begin. Thus, the dual nature of the human service rider base discussed in this report should be kept in mind.

The first big coordination effort came in 1982 when the community action agencies (CAA) were expecting major federal funding cuts. The state Community Service Block Grant Director approached the Alabama Highway Department (AHD) and requested Section 18 operating funds. The result of this contact was the development of several local contracts for Section 18 service which teamed Section 18 funds with \$500,000 (state-wide) in local community service block grant funds. The systems developed at that time are still operating as coordinated

systems. However, there has not been another major push for coordination from the human service side since that time. Thus, the efforts towards coordination have been locally lead and/or stem from efforts by the Alabama Highway Department.

Prior to the formation of the AITRC, when the Alabama Highway Department (AHD) received the Section 18 applications, all state level human service agencies were notified in writing that they were invited to review the applications. Some did so, mostly the aging agency, and what comments were received were incorporated into the Section 18 award before it was finalized.

In the past, an effort was made to obtain state legislation mandating coordination. This effort failed when the proposed legislation did not pass. Following this effort, the AHD mandated the development of local Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC's) by each Section 18 recipient. The TCC's include all local transportation providers including all human service agencies and private sector providers. The Committees must meet at least twice yearly and the minutes of these meetings must be sent to the AHD for review.

The TCC's are an effort to establish a formal forum for the discussion of common concerns and a means of encouraging coordination activities. As stated by the AHD "The function of the TCC shall be to examine the transportation needs and resources within the service area and to develop an areawide plan with input from all involved parties." In general, they are viewed as being successful endeavors. In those cases where local organizations refuse to coordinate, the AHD will provide assistance in the form of discussion with the appropriate state level agency regarding the local problem. These efforts have produced mixed results but, in the absence of a formal state level coordination body or mandate, they represent all that can be done.

The Alabama experience has been that when organizations do coordinate services, that they encounter a need for additional capital funding for additional vehicles. The AHD uses its allocation authority for capital funds as a technique for encouraging coordinated systems by placing a priority on the funding coordinated system capital needs. Twice a year (in January and in August) systems may request additional funding (all types of transit funding - operating, capital, planning - may be requested). Coordinated systems receive priority access to these additional funds.

Thus, the Alabama Highway Department has been utilizing a combination of mandated local coordinating committees, financial incentives and moral support (jawboning) to encourage local

efforts at coordination and to overcome local problems in achieving coordination. Technical support is always available for coordination matters as well as for other transportation issues or concerns.

Another coordination related issue is the requirement of certification by the Alabama Public Service Commission (PSC) for vehicles operated by private non-profits. Vehicles operated by public bodies are exempt from this requirement. The AHD coordinates with the PSC by providing a PSC sign-off sheet as part of the Section 18 application. When the application is returned to the AHD by the local system, the AHD sends the information to the PSC who, in turn, responds by indicating the need for certification and providing it or by indicating that the applicant is exempt from the certification requirement. This requirement has presented no problems in Alabama.

In obtaining coordination in Alabama it has been observed that a key element is the building of personal relationships among the individuals involved prior to building the professional coordinating relationship. Trust is viewed as a primary ingredient in making a coordinated system work. Hence, trust must be established early on in the process. The TCC's are a forum where trust can be built, of course, it may also be destroyed in that forum as well. Thus, the importance of the individuals and their interactions to the reaching of a successful coordination result is again emphasized. Talking with people and identifying ways in which their organizations can benefit from coordination and explaining what coordination means so that all parties fully understand, are viewed as foundation elements in developing the necessary trust relationships so that the level of effort needed to develop a successful coordination project can be obtained.

Executive Order No. 29 was the result a year long effort to develop a formal state level coordinating body. Those efforts were built around the Alabama delegation to the Region IV Transportation Consortium. The Region IV Transportation Consortium is an eight state consortium of state level transportation professionals representing both U.S. Department of Transportation funding programs and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funding programs. Thus, the Alabama delegation to the Region IV Consortium contains representatives of both the Alabama Highway Department and various state level human service agencies such as the Agency on Aging, the Department of Human Resources, and Medicaid to cite a few of the major participants.

This core group expanded to embrace other relevant state agencies and their efforts are now formalized into the Alabama Interagency Transportation Review Committee. The AITRC is

composed of the Alabama Highway Department, the Alabama Department of Human Resources, the Alabama Commission on Aging, the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, the Alabama Medicaid Agency and the Alabama Mental Health and Mental Retardation Administration. The Executive Order empowers the AITRC "To review all transportation components of applications or plans requesting transportation funding when the funds are administered by a Member Agency." Further, the Executive Order invites federal or state agencies not impacted by the order to join the Committee as full members; authorized the Committee to establish guidelines and criteria for review and approval of funding requests and to provide written recommendations on the applications to the appropriate state agency. The full text of Executive Order No. 29 is reproduced in Appendix A. This approach is modeled upon the North Carolina Interagency Review Committee discussed elsewhere in this report. Both the South Carolina and the Florida approaches to state level coordination were examined as part of the development process.

#### Morgan Accessible Public Transit System: MATS

The Morgan-Lawrence-Cullman Community Action Agency services three counties in northeastern Alabama. The transportation program; however, serves only Morgan County including the City of Decatur. Thus, the following discussion focuses upon the MATS (Morgan Accessible Public Transit System) program.

The Morgan-Lawrence-Cullman Community Action Agency is a multi-program agency addressing numerous human service needs in the three county service area, as noted above. By 1979 the Agency had five different programs each with its own transportation component. These programs were Head Start, Foster Grandparents, Meals On Wheels, Community Services and the Weatherization Program. For reasons no longer completely clear, it was decided that it made no sense for each of these programs to have its own vehicles and its own maintenance program, etc. Rather one person within the agency should have the responsibility for all agency program transportation.

This resulted in an internal consolidation of the transportation function into a single office. The agency was fortunate enough to have an assistant director with the vision to get and keep the internal consolidation going. While it would be nice to say that this internal consolidation and coordination served as a model for what came after, that would be a stretching of reality.

In 1981, the system applied for Section 18 funding. A state requirement for that funding is the formation of a local

Transportation Coordinating Committee. This brought together all the human service agencies in the area for the first time to discuss a coordinated transportation system. The first meeting was marked by what may be termed extreme turf protection and accomplished little other than to establish uneasy contacts.

This opening suspicion was overcome by very slow change and encouragements to cooperate. One of the first activities undertaken was to learn which agencies were servicing which routes and when. This knowledge permitted the next step in this slow movement to cooperation. At first it was requests for help in the form of picking up another agency's client along a route run by a different agency. A fare was paid for this service. This was followed by referring new clients in areas not served for transportation purposes by the direct service providing human service agency to agencies already serving that area with the referring agency paying the clients fare. The MATS program took the lead in this activity of cooperation.

This grew into a set of coordination agreements where each agency would operate its own vehicles, service other agencies' clients along established routes in return for a fare paid by the other agency and MATS would pass through federal Section 18 funds. Unfortunately, this system did not generate any local matching funds for MATS. Thus, it was changed to add an administrative charge in order to obtain some local matching funds.

Even with the coordination agreements, a rather low level of coordination is occurring. Most agency vehicles were still only in service approximately three hours a day and these agencies will not share their vehicles with other agencies. But MATS came to the conclusion that if these agency vehicles were not there, even at the existing low activity levels, that MATS would have to buy more vehicles and expand its service.

Additionally, the absence of local match (prior to the administrative charge) had forced MATS to lay-off half its transportation staff. Hence, the system had to respond in some manner so that it could get its clients to the needed social services. A contributing problem was the transportation by MATS of other agencies' clients are a fare well below costs while the benefiting agencies made no local match contribution.

Thus, MATS undertook an approach which might be termed Reality Adaptation. In other words, it adapted to the reality of the situation and executed purchase of service contracts with these other agencies. Under the purchase of service agreements, the other agencies would pick up MATS clients along their routes and be paid a \$2.00 fare (some variance by route but tends to average \$2.00 per one-way trip). Service is purchased from four

agencies: Rehabilitation Center, Commission on Aging, Mental Health and the Developmental Center. When these agencies have clients along MATS routes, MATS provides service and bills the agency \$2.00 per one-way trip.

MATS also provides general public demand responsive service with a 24-hour advance reservation along a flexible route system. When general public riders are along an agency route, the dispatching is referred to the appropriate agency. There have been no problems in mixing general public and agency clients on the same van. Most general public riders are in some manner transportation dependent and there is no fixed route service in the MATS service area.

The purchase of service system is a two-way relationship. Other agencies purchase services from MATS. These agencies are: Adult Day Care, the Developmental Center, Mental Health, and the State Department of Mental Health - Retardation Clinic. MATS also purchases services from two of these agencies as noted above. In this manner, each agency's transportation network is made to work for other agency clients; thus, reducing and, in some cases, eliminating duplication of services.

This process of purchase of service contracts and Section 18 pass through has permitted MATS to reduce its service area without reducing client transportation or general public transportation. It permits other agencies to similarly increase client transportation without direct service expansion. While this approach does not meet all of the requirements for a coordinated system, it does capture several of the benefits of a coordinated system and it does so within the reality constraints which exist in the service area.

This approach has produced a working relationship among the agencies involved and has begun to build the necessary bonds of trust which are prerequisites to further coordination activities. However two major barriers to further coordination exist for which solutions have not yet been found.

First is the general lack of knowledge on the part of many social service agencies of their true costs of transportation. This is primarily a budgeting/accounting problem. The programs within the Morgan-Lawrence-Cullman Community Action Agency know their true costs as they are a separate line item in each program budget and are expended with MATS. Other agencies know the costs of the purchase of service contracts but may not, and generally do not, know the true costs of transportation services which they directly provide. Budgeting and accounting changes are required for this information to become available to the social service agency in question and such changes must be

initiated from within the agency or from its external funding source.

Second is a turfism and perception problem. To achieve a consolidated single provider requires the various human service agencies to give-up their vehicles. MATS as the designated Section 18 recipient in Morgan County is the logical single provider. The perception of the human service agencies is that the vehicles would be given to the local community action agency and not to the local transportation provider. The resistance to such an action is considered to be less if the vehicles went to the local transportation provider and not to another human service agency. However, at this point in time, it is not considered to be feasible to separate MATS into a free standing private non-profit organization. Hence, further coordination activities in Morgan County must await solutions to one or both of these concerns to become practical solutions.

A 1987 study by the local metropolitan planning organization (MPO) recommended that the various transportation programs be brought together into a single provider. However, the local political support to bring this recommendation into reality is not present. Thus the situation described above is expected to continue into the indifferent future.

#### Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments, locally referred to as the COG, is the regional planning body for five counties in northwest Alabama. It currently operates a public transportation system serving four of the five counties. Transportation services are provided in Lauderdale, Colbert, Franklin and Marion Counties. The fifth county, Winston County, had preexisting service and is more closely tied to the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center service (Northwest Alabama Transportation Systems - NATS) discussed subsequently in this report.

In 1984, the COG undertook some research regarding public transit feasibility in its service area. This research indicated that Franklin County had no public transit and, with the exception of limited service by the Alabama Department of Pensions and Security, no human service client transportation. Thus, major benefits would arise from the institution of public transit in this county. Additionally, there was strong local political support for the project. Thus, the decision to develop a public transit system in Franklin County as a sort-of pilot project was made.

The term "sort-of" pilot project is used because it was not a pilot project in the strict sense of the term. The basic intent to extend public transit to a multi-county area was in place; however, if the Franklin project was not successful, then the expansion of service would have to be rethought.

To develop the Franklin project, the COG brought together all the interested parties to assess the potential and to identify all of the resources which could be available, not limited to vehicles. All human service agencies, local elected officials, the general public, potential riders, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the media were all invited and were represented in the attendance. Out of this meeting came several decisions which shaped the resultant system.

The decision was made that the best approach was to start with a system embracing the human service clients and thereby obtain a guaranteed base ridership. This became the underlying approach throughout the multi-county service area as the service was expanded: develop a base ridership composed of human service clients and then expand that system to embrace the general public.

The second item of importance which was discovered at the initial meeting was that there were no vehicles available. Only the local Area Agency on Aging had any vehicles and they were restricted to serving the elderly. However, the agency was willing to make those vehicles (two vans) available to serve other elderly as part of a coordinated system. The TVA had two vehicles in Knoxville, Tennessee which the system could use for \$163 per month including insurance until new vehicles could be obtained. These two sources provided the start-up vehicles for the Franklin County service.

The third decision was to form a Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) and apply for Section 18 funding. Flowing from this decision was the decision for the TCC to conduct further research by conducting a human service client survey and a general public survey to learn the potential ridership, the best times of service and the preferred origins and destinations of the potential ridership. The system to be developed would be tailored to the needs of the ridership as revealed in the surveys.

The system would be housed in the COG and its Board of Directors would be composed of the local elected officials of the five counties composing the COG. This decision had several important advantages which deserve special note. First, the COG was organizationally neutral with respect to other human service agencies; thus, turf concerns did not arise. Second, the COG was perceived as a general public service organization and not

as a welfare service organization; thus, the general public did not view the resulting transportation system as part of the welfare system. And third, the COG's board was already composed of the local elected officials; hence, providing political creditability to the emerging transit system.

These favorable start-up conditions have produced a system which carries a mixture of passengers on the same vehicles without difficulty and which has broad popular and political support. These factors have permitted the evolved multi-county system to respond to changing needs in positive and creative ways without notable organizational or political difficulties.

The development of the Franklin system, and by extension the multi-county system, involved extensive educational work with the local human service agencies. These agencies had to be convinced that the COG was sincere about providing good service to their clients and that the COG would work with them if they joined the system. Some concerns were raised regarding the loss of identity by the participating human service agencies. However, those agencies became convinced that the COG's interests did not extend beyond the provision of a transportation service and that their individual identity was not threatened.

By proving through the delivery of service that the needs of their clients would be met and that their individual circumstances could be met by contracts tailored to their needs, these concerns of the human service agencies disappeared. Now all human service agencies in the multi-county service area are part of the system.

As the Franklin service was being brought on line, the TCC developed a five year plan to expand service to the full four county service area. This plan was met in three years. In order to develop the five year plan and the specifics of the service delivery techniques, the COG utilized various sources of technical information, including a three day site visit to Johnstown, PA. Publications issued by the AHD, the U.S. Department of Transportation (UMTA and the Office of Technology Sharing) were utilized. The resources of the Public-Private Transportation Network (PPTN) were tapped and other providers were asked for their experiences and insights. Some of the information was useful and helpful. However, most was found to be aimed at larger providers and not particularly useful to the smaller providers. Additionally, the available information was not focused on start-up systems, which was the main technical information need.

The following system particulars apply to the full multi-county system as it has been developed.

When the system moved beyond Franklin County those agencies with vehicles merged their vehicles into the COG system including their drivers. The drivers were retained but placed on the COG payroll. In general there have not been difficulties regarding the agency name remaining on the vehicle (vehicles carry the COG name not a human service agency name). In those cases where the human service agency felt strongly on this matter, their name remained on the vehicle after the merger. Over time, however, this concern has eased and human service agency names are no longer requested to be on the vehicles.

Vehicle title rested initially with the individual agency (the merged vehicles) while new or replacement vehicles are purchased through the COG which retains title. This is consistent with state and federal policies. The local capital matching funds for new or replacement vehicles come from the agency requesting the vehicle. Vehicles are assigned to a particular agency and are not switched, even though they are shared on a regular basis without problems. All vehicles have the same color and logo's and, as noted above, carry the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Government name. All total twenty-three human service agencies are parties to this system.

Dispatching is centrally handled through three dispatch centers. Dispatch for Colbert and Lauderdale Counties is based in Florence, Alabama which is on the county line and is done by the COG. Dispatch for Franklin County is done by the Senior Center in Russellville, while dispatch for Marion County is handled by the Marion Community Action Agency in Hamilton. Agencies also handle scheduling for their assigned vehicles. The dispatch centers predominately handle general public demand responsive service and agency clients who are not on an established agency route.

Service contracts run both from and to the COG. The human service agencies contract with the COG for service and pay the COG. The COG also contracts with human service agencies for general public service and pays the agencies. Payment can take a variety of contractual forms. The majority of the contracts involve a fixed fee and a percentage of farebox revenues. Others are fixed fee for fixed service. Contract revenues are used for local operating matching funds. Additionally, Senior Aides are provided and used as in-kind match. On the home-to-work service, noted below, drivers donate their time and ride for free while other riders pay a fare. The donated time is used as in-kind match.

Other matching funds derives from local government general fund revenues and various in-kind services. For example, in Franklin County the sheriff's department cleans the vehicles

and, when the system first started, the Alabama Highway Department provided maintenance services.

The primary non-local funding derives from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration's Section 18 and Section 9 programs. Capital replacement is predominately drawn from the Section 9 program. While operating and administrative funding is a mixture of Section 9 and Section 18.

It was noted above that the organizational framework permitted relatively rapid responses to changing circumstances. Two examples will serve to illustrate this aspect of the COG's system. When federal funding cut backs forced the Area Agencies on Aging to reduce their transportation to only the Meals On Wheels program, the COG responded by adding an elderly and handicapped 24-hour advance reservation demand responsive service provided under contract with two taxi firms. Thereby, filling the resulting gap.

When several major employers in the area closed or had major layoffs, the COG began a home-to-work trip program. In this manner people could continue to live in the COG service area because they could obtain affordable transportation to jobs in the Huntsville-Athens area which is outside the COG counties. This program is basically a shared van program with a designated volunteer driver and fare paying regular passengers. Three shifts of vehicles are run. The COG has been unable to fulfill all of the requests for vans as the program is extremely popular. The program is also popular with local governments as it permits their citizens to remain living within their jurisdictions while working elsewhere; thus, protecting a tax base already damaged by the plant closings.

The system is designed so that four-to-five people at the COG can manage the system regardless of how large it eventually gets. Thus, it is doubtful that a sizable administrative overhead expense will ever be incurred. At its heart, this is a decentralized coordinated system. This approach permits the focusing of the available funding on service delivery to a greater degree than is possible in systems with more extensive administrative establishments.

Several ingredients seem to be especially important to the success of this system. One is the pre-existing high level of community involvement in the service area, especially in Florence. This provided a solid base from which to build. The relationships between the COG and the various human service agencies were good from the beginning and the relationships among the human service agencies were pretty good, there were only limited turfism problems. Second, while the human service

agencies had mixed relationships with their local elected officials, the COG had good relationships with these officials.

These factors permitted and encouraged the building of trust relationships which are so vital to the success of a coordinated system. A telling comment which was received was that "What made it all work was the human heart and all the work which people were willing to put into making it work". Such work can not be sustained in the absence of trust and of proven service delivery.

#### Northwest Alabama Transportation Systems: NATS

The Northwest Alabama Transportation Systems (NATS) is operated by the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center. The Mental Health Center serves a four county area: Fayette, Lamar, Walker and Winston Counties. The public transportation service operated by this agency focuses primarily upon Fayette and Lamar Counties, while other agencies operate public transportation in Walker and Winston Counties. There are positive relationships between these agencies and Northwest Alabama Mental Health's NATS program, as noted below.

In Fayette County, the human service agencies had an existing Interagency Council as a means of interagency cooperation independent of funding concerns. This council had a transportation subcommittee. One of the council members (Kathy Robinson) suggested that the possibilities of Section 18 funding be examined. This started out as a public service approach not realizing the benefits which could accrue to the agencies. When the benefits to the agencies were understood, the county agencies in Fayette County saw Section 18 as a means to expand and improve their transportation network. The Interagency Council requested the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center be the designated single agency as required by the Alabama Highway Department. Interestingly enough, no agency wanted the task; thus, from the very beginning, turfism was not a problem in Fayette County.

It is worth noting at this point that the advent of Section 18 funds did not reduce the transportation expenditures previously being made by the human service agencies. That level of commitment was continued with Section 18 funds being viewed as a means to expand and improve service rather than as a substitute source of funds for transportation. That this commitment held even in a period of funding cut backs is a meaningful commentary on the commitment of the agencies involved and on the service provided by the NATS system.

The Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center agreed to write the Section 18 grant application and operate the resulting system as part of a county wide effort. The other human service agencies are members of the Transportation Coordinating Committee, formed from the Interagency Council's Transportation Subcommittee in response to AHD requirements, and contract for service with the Northwest Alabama Transit System.

Thus, the current public transportation system in Fayette County and, subsequently, in Lamar County developed in direct response to the availability of UMTA Section 18 funds. Prior to Section 18, each agency operated its own transportation service or, if it had no transportation service, its clients made their own transport arrangements.

Following the development of the Section 18 funded system in 1982, transportation services increased dramatically. The mental retardation program, for example, more than doubled its work site trips. The system enjoys agency, political and popular support. The Fayette service was so successful that Lamar County requested NATS to expand into Lamar which, at that time, had an agency based transportation service similar to what had existed in Fayette County. NATS took it over and rapidly expanded the service. This occurred in 1983, again utilizing Section 18 funding.

Fayette County had a definite advantage in establishing the NATS system, namely, good interagency relationships. In Lamar County, the interagency relationships were not as strong but the Lamar agencies did have good relationships with the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center. Thus, it was a fairly easy matter to let the Mental Health Center take over their vehicles and develop and expand the NATS system into Lamar County. Such a solution might not have been possible if the single provider had been one of the Lamar agencies.

As one might expect in an innovative rural area, the system's service structure incorporates several different but integrated types of service and is the product of evolution and experience. The basic route system reflects the human service agencies' clients' origins and destinations and is a flexible route deviation approach which requests a 24-hour advance reservation for persons who are not picked-up daily. This applies to the general public and to agency clients who do not ride daily. The agency clients provide the guaranteed ridership base upon which the general public service can be layered. Mixing of clients and general public on the same vehicle is done without difficulties. There are no trip purpose restrictions and the vans are lift equipped.

Non-scheduled trips to the Tuscaloosa Medical Centers (Tuscaloosa County) and to the Greyhound Bus Terminal in Winfield (Marion County) are available in response to demand. Medical trips for the elderly and the handicapped to Birmingham (Jefferson County) and to Tuscaloosa are arranged through a contact with the Kennedy Taxi Service, a private for-profit organization which also operates a half-fare demand responsive service in Fayette County for the elderly and the handicapped. This service provides individual and shared ride service, day and night service, Sunday church service and bus feeder service. These services are provide under contract with NATS.

NATS operated a fixed route service in the Town of Fayette for one year. Even though signage and promotion were undertaken, the ridership was very low and the service was discontinued.

Service to senior nutrition sites in three towns in Fayette County (Berry, Fayette and Hubbertville) are conducted under contract to the Fayette Community Action Agency. The Community Action Agency also funds shopping trips for seniors on NATS which provides assistance handling groceries. The fare for these services is \$ .25 per trip.

Most of the general public ridership is on the Dial-A-Ride service which operates under an Alabama Public Service Commission tariff (PSC) and requests a 24-hour advance reservation. The PSC tariff specifies regular routes between Berry (southeastern Fayette County) and Fayette and between Winfield (Marion County, serving northern Fayette County) and Fayette. One mile off route deviation is allowed on both routes. A one-way fare of \$1.00 is approved for these routes.

Irregular route authority is granted within the Townships of Fayette, Vernon, Sulligent, Berry, Millport/Kennedy area, Jasper, Haleyville, Double Springs and Detroit. This listing includes communities in Fayette County and communities in Lamar County. The approved fare is \$1.00 round trip. Irregular route authority is also granted on an all points basis in Fayette, Lamar, Winston, Marion and Walker Counties and for occasional trips from Fayette to Tuscaloosa. The approved fare is \$ .40 per mile.

Agency contracted routes are authorized to carry the general public at a fare of \$ .40 per mile within Fayette, Lamar, Marion, Walker and Winston Counties on an all points basis. A PSC tariff is not required for service to agency clients.

Within Fayette County, NATS operates four regular route deviation routes daily Monday thru Friday, mornings in-bound to

Fayette Township and afternoons out-bound. These routes service Berry and Bankston in the southeastern part of the county, Covin and Belk in the southwestern part, northern Fayette County including part of Winfield (in Marion County) and the Canaan Community which is not on the highway department map but seems to be in the center southeast of the county based on road names served.

With the exception of the Kennedy Taxi Company, all vehicles are owned and operated by NATS. Service to agencies is provided under individually tailored contracts as is the Kennedy Taxi service. The contract details show a fair amount of variation reflecting individual agency needs and financial capacities. While some service is undertaken as a public service and for a lower than normal cost to the receiving agency, most contracts call for the agency to pay actual operating costs plus 25% administrative. Each human service agency in Fayette County and in Lamar County have transportation line items within their overall budgets. Capital matching funds for vehicle replacement come from the agencies. Local governments and local civic groups also contribute funds to the system which are used for matching purposes.

All maintenance and dispatch is provided by NATS. Each county has its own dispatch center but all the counties are linked by a single radio system. The radio system serves the five county Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center's service area for mental health purposes and it serves four counties for transportation purposes. NATS operates seven vans in Lamar County and nine vans and two 25-passenger buses in Fayette County.

As indicated above, local funding derives from contract revenue, charter revenue, grants from local governments and civic groups and from agency contributions for capital match purposes. The organization also derives revenue from charter services. When NATS came under pressure to increase its fares, it expanded the evening charter business instead. Section 18 is the source of direct federal funds financing the system. Clearly, agency contract revenue often originates as federal funds to the agency involved.

The above discussion has focused upon NATS service in Fayette and Lamar Counties. Yet, reference has been made to a four county transportation program. Less this become more confusing that it actually is, some attention should be devoted to the transportation activities in Walker and Winston Counties.

In terms of local interagency relationships, local political support and local financing capacity, Walker and Winston Counties vary notably from Fayette and Lamar Counties.

While over time the agencies have built up the necessary trust to engage in a coordinated transportation system other critical factors are still missing. In both counties the local political support for a single agency approach is lacking. While this is an important factor, the necessary support might be obtainable if the necessary resources, especially financial, were available.

Additionally, to transfer the Fayette-Lamar model requires a basic system of human service client routes on to which the general public ridership can be added. Such routes are not in place in Winston County and are only now being developed in Walker County.

In Winston County, NATS operates a route for the mental health programs and the general public. The Winston County Community Action Agency passes through a percentage of the expenses to help fund the service. NATS believes that with an addition of two vans and the development of local operating funding, a full public transportation system along the Fayette-Lamar lines can be developed in Winston County; however, the funding for the vans and their operation is absent.

In Walker County, the Community Action Agency also participates with NATS for some service on a percentage pass through basis. In Walker the Area Agency on Aging operates routes for the elderly and carries general public riders as well. However, the routes are not well connected to those of other agencies and, hence, can not serve as the basis for building a system along the Fayette-Lamar lines. Agency turfism with respect to vehicles is also a problem in Walker County. Additionally, a lack of financial resources and the absence of positive political support work against efforts to build a coordinated system. However, NATS did write a Section 18 grant application for the implementing agency in Walker County, hence good relationships across the county line do exist which is a positive sign for the future.

Even though progress towards coordinated systems in Winston and Walker Counties is moving forward slowly, NATS is of the opinion that the situation will "work out." When that will be is clearly an open question.

Independent of the speed of the movement toward coordination in Walker and Winston Counties, the same principles which make the service in Fayette and Lamar Counties successful are applicable. A review of these "key" elements seems to be in order at this point.

Trust is a key, if not the key, element in a successful coordination effort. At NATS the view is that one becomes

trusted by being trustworthy. Hence strong efforts were made from the beginning to have friendly well trained drivers, safe well maintained vehicles and to operate them on time. In other words, meet the needs of the participating agencies. At one point the fulfillment of this objective produced a level of unhappiness with the agency's mental health clients, but, through education and communication, those concerns were worked out.

Another key is to create a Win-Win situation where all parties to the coordination effort are better off. By working closely with the agencies and tailoring contracts and service to their individual needs, this result can be obtained. However, recall that the benefits from coordination are not always immediate. Hence, the establishment of the trust bonds are important to having agencies willing to wait for the benefits to become clear.

The "correct" organizational arrangement is also an important element. While there is no clear cut answer as to what the correct pattern is, what is clear is that the single provider agency must have the trust of the participating agencies and have the capacity to deliver the service in a reliable and quality manner.

At the operating level, the necessity of a human service client route base which can be enhanced and expanded to include the general public as well as more agency clients is a key beginning factor. While these routes can be built, as is being attempted in Walker County, the existence of such routes or the ability to merge existing services into such routes, is to be preferred.

### Summary Comments

While the three systems reviewed above have many notable differences and have achieved varying levels of success, several common elements emerge. For simplicity, these elements might be referred to as the Alabama Model. These elements include:

- \* The development of personal trust bonds before the development of organizational trust bonds
- \* The development of organizational trust bonds as prerequisite for successful coordination
- \* Maintaining trust by being trustworthy

- \* The use of a human service client route structure as the basis for expanding into a general public route structure, a different view of the captive rider where such riders provide the guaranteed ridership needed to keep the system viable while general public ridership is built
- \* The downside of the human service base approach is the welfare image which can attach to a system so constructed and the retarding impacts that may have on the development of general public ridership
- \* The selection of a neutral or well respected/trusted agency as the single provider with respect to human service clients as was done in the case of the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center (the NATS organizational base)
- \* The use of a non-human service agency to overcome the image of human service transportation as welfare transportation as was done in the case of the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments
- \* The practice of Adaptive Reality as in the case of MATS where agencies would not yield vehicles to the single provider so the single provider contracts with the agencies and gets the service of their vehicles in that manner, a bit more complex but it produces a coordinated result whether the participating agencies realize it or not
- \* The two way contracting arrangements, whereby coordination is achieved through a net of contracting arrangements among agencies, do not have the organizational clarity of a consolidated system but can produce the same or very similar result in terms of service on the streets.

The essential elements of the Alabama Model are summarized above. While the base elements are fairly straight forward and easy to grasp, the actual conduct of the model, relying as it does on extensive interlocking contracting arrangements, is much more complex (parallel contracting may be a more precise term, but the effect is to interlock the agencies in a two-way contractual bond).

Even in such straight forward appearing cases as the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments, the system is held together by a net of interlocking contracts. In other cases such as MATS, the situation seems to approach a smoke and

mirrors magic trick where a coordinated result is obtained despite the fact that the human service agencies do not really want to be part of a coordinated system.

All of this leads to an additional characteristic which is the relative ease with which people inside the system understand the arrangements and the relative difficulty which people outside of the arrangements have in understanding them. This should not be taken as a negative statement but as a challenge for the approach has permitted the development of working, coordinated rural public transit systems/arrangements under conditions where more conventional or clean cut approaches would not have worked. The Japanese have a term which roughly translates as "playing ball on running water". It seems an appropriate term and the Alabama players seem to be quite good at it.



## CHAPTER FOUR: THE GEORGIA CASE STUDY

### Introduction

This document reports the results of the site visits to systems in the State of Georgia as well as the activities occurring at the state level. The state level activities are reviewed first, followed by the results of the two system site visits and, then, the conclusions and implications drawn there from.

### State Level Coordinating Body

One reason for the selection of Georgia as a case study state was the understanding that a state level coordinating body existed in a form similar to that found in another case study state (North Carolina) but that it functioned in a different manner. Two somewhat different views of this body are reported below. Both appear to be essentially correct.

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) reports that there was a state level coordinating body composed of GDOT, Georgia Department of Human Resources (GDHR) and the Georgia Department of Education which met quarterly to discuss specific problems. Only specific problems were discussed. However, it was determined that the problems could be best worked out at the local level. Therefore the council was phased out about 5 years ago (approximately 1983). GDOT expressed the view the phase out may not have been by intent so much as by neglect as the problem solving had been passed to the local level.

GDHR, on the other hand, reports that there exists a body called the Transportation Coordinating Council and Resources which includes GDOT, GDHR, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Department of Administrative Services, the Governor's Office, and the regional office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources with the regional office of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) to be added.

GDHR reports that the body has never met or, at least, has not met in a long time. Apparently this is not inconsistent with the body's mission. GDHR reports that the purpose of the body is to deal with matters which affect all members of the body. Thus, it does not meet unless a "corporate decision" (i.e. one impacting all members) is needed.

Thus, both the GDOT and the GDHR information can be viewed as correctly describing the state level coordinating body in Georgia. For all practical purposes, there is no such body and there is no formal state level coordination of transportation issues in Georgia.

Georgia Department of Transportation

The Bureau of Public Transportation of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) administers the Urban Mass Transportation Administration's Sections 3, 6, 8, 9 and 18 programs in the state. Until October 1, 1988 it also administered the Section 16(b)(2) program. However, on that date the program was transferred to the Georgia Department of Human Resources (GDHR). In practice the transfer began in February 1988 and was still continuing in May 1989. The October 1, 1988 date is the effective date specified by the Governor.

Philosophy and Policy Interactions

It is worthwhile to note, early on, that, while coordination is a federally mandated objective, it is only one of the tasks given a Section 18 public transportation provider. GDOT views coordination, rather correctly, as human services transportation while the primary thrust of the Section 18 program is general public transportation.

This particular point is one that requires careful attention as it entails an important philosophical difference from the other states in this study which produces important administrative differences. If the Georgia approach is to be correctly understood and if some of the comments noted in this report are to be placed into the correct context this matter of philosophical approach must be given greater attention.

The purpose of the present study is to identify methods and techniques for achieving a higher degree of service and financial coordination between UMTA Section 18 transportation providers and transportation funded by USDHHS programs. While the Georgia Section 18 program is criticized in the subsequent discussion for not reaching its full coordination potential, it is very important to view these criticisms within the context of Georgia state policy. Herein the philosophical differences with the other states in this study becomes critical. While not becoming less valid from the perspective of the study, some of the criticisms noted in the study can be viewed as overly critical from the perspective of the philosophical objectives of GDOT.

GDOT operates:

the Section 18 program based on our construction of the intent of the authorizing statutes. The statute in our interpretation establishes the primary role of Section 18 as that of a public transportation provider not unlike

traditional urban systems. Thus our process from the beginning has been to provide funding only to public entities, primarily counties. Through our contracts and policies we encourage these services be oriented toward the general public. To this end we have established goal to derive 20 percent of the operating costs from paying riders. The policy specifically excludes purchase of service contracts. We do allow and encourage purchase of service contracts with various programs but encourage the full allocation of costs. We do not believe services to the general public should be constrained through the diversion of Section 18 funds for exclusive transportation services.

In terms of coordination we make a major effort to assist local governments in all possible ways to operate effective and responsive public transportation services. This assistance is provided at the transportation District level as well as through the State network of Regional Development Commissions (formerly Area Planning and Development Commissions). We believe and local public officials seem to concur that this gives structure and organizational substance to the Section 18 program.

Although the Department made a major effort to provide a similar level of assistance to Section 16(b)(2) program it ultimately became apparent that statutory differences in the two programs precluded the effective merging of the programs as frequently occurred. As a result the Governor at the Department's request on October 1, 1988 transferred the Section 16(b)(2) program to the Georgia Department of Human Resources (1).

### Section 18 Program

Section 18 funds recipients in Georgia are normally county governments. Of the approximately 60 Section 18 systems, three are funded through cities and the rest are funded through county governments. The advantage of county operation or oversight is, in GDOT's view, stronger local support and greater coordination of service. GDOT reports that local politicians like the Section 18 program and are supportive of it.

The Section 18 program as a county operated program is a major theme of the Georgia rural public transportation program.

As a county operated program, public transportation becomes a part of the services provided by government. This gives the rural public transit system an identification and a support it would not have as a private non profit operation. Federal policy for the

Section 18 program clearly aims to establish a public program. By becoming a part of the government services provided, it becomes a regular part of the County's responsibilities and receives County administrative, financial, logistic and political support. (2)

GDOT is of the view that the decentralized oversight system discussed below and the placing of the county as the funds recipient encourages the use of purchase of service contracts and, thus, of coordination. While purchase of service contract information is part of the application information and the invoice information submitted to GDOT, the state maintains no separate listing of the number or size of purchase of service contracts. Even though GDOT believes that there are "lots" of purchase of service contracts in place, GDOT could not provide a total count or a total dollar amount. The system respondents were using purchase of service contracts.

GDOT has a recently adopted policy goal for each system to obtain 20% of its operating costs from system generated revenues. That policy is currently in force. System generated revenues includes fares and any other service fees which may be generated, but excludes purchase of service contracts (see above reference 1).

GDOT requires that the administrative costs less insurance of any given Section 18 program not exceed 20% of its operating costs. Administrative and operating costs and capital are funded as a single grant application; however, they are separate contracts.

GDOT does not require liability insurance. However, Georgia Law does requires liability insurance and GDOT "as the administrator of the program seeks to assure compliance with applicable state and federal laws." (3) Currently operators must carry liability insurance coverage of \$100,000 for injury to one person, \$300,000 for injury to two or more persons and \$50,000 for property damage for vans with 15 or fewer passengers. For vans with more than 15 passengers the liability requirements are \$100,000, \$500,000 and \$50,000. GDOT also requires uninsured motorist coverage and Personal Injury Protection (PIP) coverage. As a matter of current policy, GDOT is only approving vehicles of 15 or fewer passengers.

Annual GDOT sends a letter to "all county governments informing them of the availability of the program. The letters are followed up by a phone call to ascertain interest." (4) Additional information or assistance is provided upon request.

GDOT projects no shortages in Section 18 funding through 1991. This projection allows for system expansion and the addition of new systems. GDOT is also looking to improved cost controls in the future, as noted below, to assist in maintaining an adequate funds balance. Growth in system revenues, predominately in the form of increased purchase of service contracts, is reducing the need for Section 18 operating funds and is expected to continue to contribute in that manner in the future. Indeed, Section 18 allocations have been reduced during the spring of 1989 because systems have not been utilizing all of the allocated funds. The reported reasons for this comes in two versions. One is that the systems were overallocated to start with due to incorrect cost projections (hence the interest in the cost allocation workshop noted elsewhere). The second version is that more revenues from Purchase of Service contracts were generated than expected. Since these are not incompatible statements and since these two views originated in different parts of the organization with different responsibilities it is probable that both are correct.

As of the end of 1988, the Section 18 systems operated 199 vehicles. The number of Section 18 vehicles is projected to grow to 252 by the end of 1989. GDOT observes the ridership numbers reported as part of the Service Criteria (see below), when a system is observed operating in the 600 to 700 passenger trips per month per vehicle range, that system is a candidate for additional vehicles. Fleet "expansion can also be justified by expansion of service, or other reasonable purpose." (5) Capital funding is available to support approved expansion.

In many respects, the Section 18 program in Georgia is still a relatively new program and is still undergoing changes and evolution. For example, approximately two years ago the Section 18 application form was reduced in size to encourage some counties to apply for these funds as well as to ease the application burden. The state wide fleet has grown and the number of systems has increased dramatically. Much of this growth has been in recent years. To illustrate, in the Gainesville Transportation District, there are currently ten Section 18 programs with two more counties considering starting a system. Approximately, five years ago this district had only three Section 18 systems. This growth pattern is repeated across the state.

In Georgia, the Section 18 program is entering a new phase of its development. In part this is a result of the rapid system growth in recent years and in part a reflection of the experiences of past years and of the increasing sophistication of the system operators. In the future, the state will be

placing a greater emphasis on in-depth planning and a more sophisticated level of planning. In line with this are the beginning efforts to move from county TDP's to regional TDP's and even to include counties without a currently existing Section 18 program. The regional TDP's would be built up from the county level rather than constructed from the top - regional level - down to the county.

Additionally, greater emphasis will be placed on knowing the actual costs of providing service. The cost allocation workshop, noted below, is a step in that effort. The goals of these efforts are to produce a Section 18 system which is better controlled by its management, run in a more business like manner, provides more service and is more efficient in doing so.

#### Section 18 and Other Vehicles

While this may appear to be an odd section heading, the issue of the use of Section 18 funds to operate vehicles not purchased with Section 18 funds became an issue during the site visits. The essence of the problem is whether or not GDOT will allow Section 18 operating funds to be used to operate a vehicle not purchased under a program administered by GDOT. The issue was raised in the context of non-GDOT program purchased vehicles being given to Section 18 systems and then service being purchased from the Section 18 systems. In Hall County such a transfer was proposed but not realized. The operator was told that GDOT would not provide operating assistance for any State of Georgia/DHR van from the local mental health office. This topic is reviewed in more detail during the appropriate case study discussion.

After some initial unclarity\*, the GDOT policy is that Section 18 funds can be used to operate any vehicle that is titled, free and clear, to the county (city, if a city run program), is used only for public transportation purposes and its usage is free of any encumbrances or restrictions. Thus, if an agency wishes to and legally can transfer a vehicle to a Section 18 program, the Section 18 funds can be used to operate it provided that no restrictions on usage are placed on the vehicle by the transferring agency and provided that title is transferred to the appropriate local governmental body.

\* The policy noted above is the second version which was reported by different persons working for GDOT. The other version was that the vehicle must be purchased by Section 18 funds. Based on comments received, it appears that both versions have been applicable at different times.

The legality of such a transfer depends upon the original source of funding for the vehicle purchase. In that, if purchased with usage restricted federal funds or with other usage/agency restricted funds, appropriate approvals must be obtained (approval may or may be obtainable) or the vehicle must be declared surplus (a surplus declaration makes little sense in this context). Vehicles purchased with unrestricted funds do not bring this consideration.

#### Service Criteria and Coordination Requirements

The Department's Section 18 service goals include "efficient utilization through coordination with other transportation providers within both the private and public sector." (6) The tool for realizing coordination is the Service Criteria and Annual Certification which all Section 18 operators must meet. The view of GDOT is that the provider can not meet these criteria without coordinating service. No direct evidence of coordination is required of the operators. Only the indirect stick of meeting the service criteria is used. These criteria applied equally to Section 16(b)(2) vehicles when that program was administered by GDOT. Initially, GDHR has adopted all of the GDOT service criteria for the Section 16(b)(2) program.

The service criteria state:

1. The service should be complimentary and not duplicate other transportation services.
2. Monthly ridership should exceed 500 person trips per active vehicle in service.
3. Vehicle utilization should exceed 120 hours per month per active vehicle.
4. Vehicles should be available for service on a daily basis.
5. Vehicle trips for contract or charter service should at a minimum recover all costs.
6. Regular service ridership should exceed 0.5 passengers per vehicle service mile. (7)

Annually each system must be evaluated with respect to "the operations services, program policy requirements and compliance with service standards." (8) This evaluation is conducted by the Public Transportation District

Representatives, who are commonly know as district representatives (role of these individuals is explained below), and results in one of three findings: Certified, Conditionally Certified or Not Certified. If an operator is Certified then the system meets all criteria. A Conditionally Certified means that the system has problems, are meeting some but not all of the criteria. Such a system is required to address the problems and to provide monthly progress reports to the district representative. A Not Certified finding means the system has major problems and is not meeting most or any of the criteria. This latter condition has not occurred to-date.

#### Technical Assistance and System Oversight

The major method of system oversight from the state is by means of the transportation district representatives. The highway side of GDOT has divided the state into seven transportation districts. The Bureau of Public Transportation utilizes these districts. In each district a district representative oversees the Section 18 programs in his/her district. The oversight includes semi-annual inspections of the vehicles (previously these inspections were conducted quarterly), conducting the annual service criteria certification and assistance and support on administrative and policy matters. The semi-annual vehicle inspections are "for operating condition, not for safety." (9)

Technical support assistance is provided by Area Planning and Development Commissions (APDC). Each APDC embraces 10 - 12 counties and there are 18 APDC's in the state. GDOT contracts with 16 of these to provide technical assistance to Section 18 operators. The exceptions are APDC's serving urbanized areas.

Each APDC has a transportation coordinator who meets monthly with each Section 18 operator, conducts quarterly district wide meetings of operators and provides GDOT with monthly reports on each operator. These individuals conduct spot checks of vehicles and provide management support. Areas of technical assistance include: maintenance, reimbursement forms, consolidation, coordination, marketing, privatization, car pool/van pool and ridesharing. A circuit rider approach is taken to visiting the systems with each system visited monthly. (see Appendix B for a more detailed listing of duties).

The APDC transportation coordinator functions as staff to the district transportation engineer. These individuals meet monthly and at other times upon the request of the district representative. The APDC contracts with GDOT are funded 50% from Section 18 administrative funds, 25% state funds and 25% from the APDC.

An additional aspect of this arrangement is that the district representatives have the ability to call upon any of the personnel at the district office for assistance whether or not that individual has public transportation duties. This has brought more talent to bear on public transportation matters than may be immediately apparent. For example, in the case of Park and Ride lots, the district representative will work with the county on the site selection, the district right of way personnel will arrange for right of way, the district site design personnel will design the layout, signage, etc. Thus a complete design is sent to Atlanta for final approval. Of these persons, only the district representative is actually assigned to public transportation duties. Thus, the talent base of the entire district office may be brought to bear on public transportation matters upon need.

This system was developed in order to utilize an existing organization structure (rather than create another one), to make the system decentralized and to place the emphasis on working at the local level via the transportation representative.

The case study respondents gave high praise to the quality and helpfulness of their district representatives. The APDC representatives received mixed reviews with one system speaking highly of them and another expressing an extremely low level of confidence. The two systems are in different APDC's and in different transportation districts. It should be noted that GDOT objects to the comment regarding the APDC's on the grounds that such a comment is not appropriate to this study and that their contacts with the counties do not substantiate this comment. (10)

Additionally, each operator submits monthly reports to GDOT. These reports must include: mileage, ridership, operating revenues and expenses and days in service. (11)

The transit managers statewide meet approximately twice a year at the invitation of GDOT. The case study respondents report that there has been a lag since the last meeting. They report that these meetings have usually been one day events addressing particular policy or form changes and not forums for technical training or general sharing of concerns.

Technical training workshops are held at the district level as are district wide meetings, as noted above. The most recent workshop dealt with cost allocation issues. GDOT believes its' technical training program to be of high quality and meets the needs of the system operators.

The cost allocation workshop noted above was conducted as part of GDOT's Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP). Under the RTAP training activities the APDC's have already conducted the RTAP "Substance Abuse Awareness in Rural Transit" workshop for each county with a Section 18 program. In the near future the RTAP "Understanding The Capabilities and Needs of Special Passengers" and the RTAP "Driver Safety Training" courses will be taught. Additionally, Georgia Technical Institute has been retained with RTAP funds to conduct an evaluation of computer usage for each city and county with a Section 18 program. Following that evaluation, five different computer usage training courses will be taught in three different locations around the state. As part of the same contract, the Management Information System (MIS) at GDOT's Bureau of Public Transit will be improved. The RTAP training program appears to be moving along very well in Georgia.

Systems are not permitted to utilize Section 18 funds for travel to conferences and workshops. Thus, only those systems with local travel funds are able to attend conferences or workshops not presented by GDOT. GDOT's perspective here is two fold. First, the information and training presented at conferences is not personalized while the information and assistance provided via the district representatives and the APDCs is personalized and tailored to the needs of the system. Hence, this technical assistance program provides superior assistance than does conference attendance. Second, Section 18 funds should focus on operating the system and must be carefully managed in order to obtain the maximum service from the available dollars. Hence travel should occur from local funds as the travel decision is a local one.

While this topic is addressed subsequently in this report, it is appropriate to note at this juncture that system operators expressed a desire to attend conferences and to have a higher level of interaction with other operators. While expressing a very high level of satisfaction with the assistance provided under the present system, attending conferences and workshops, especially national meetings and out of state technical training events was viewed as having the potential for providing benefits to system operations. Several persons interviewed did not realize that other states permitted Section 18 funds to be used for travel. There is no state association of transit operators and other transit professionals in Georgia.

### Fares

GDOT reports that most Section 18 systems do not charge a fare, but will accept contributions. Of the 114 Georgia Rural Systems (Section 18 and Section 16(b)(2)) in 1986, 41 programs

reported charging a fare (36%) while 73 programs (64% reported accepting donations only. (12)

### Vehicle Procurement

Vehicle procurement must be done via the Georgia Department of Administrative Services. The vans are ordered from the manufacturer and delivered to the system. Then, in a separate procurement, the vans are sent to be converted to meet system needs. The specifications are established by the state and not the individual system.

This procedure has produced lengthy delays in the usability of the van, no choice in vehicle type (only vans of 15 or fewer passengers are allowed) and, in at least one case, has increased maintenance costs. One respondent reports a van being delivered from the manufacturer in April and was still awaiting conversion the following September. In the meantime, the van could not be used, but sat in the providers parking lot. Another respondent reports having to replace shocks, air conditioning and other parts in order to get the van in a condition that it would meet actual usage requirements. This respondent reported that the state mandated specifications were "not up to actual usage." But also noted that it is a fairly new program and all the "bugs" are not yet out of the system.

The vehicle specifications are finalized by the Georgia Department of Administrative Services with input from GDOT. In the past vehicle specifications have been changed based upon in-field experiences. Generally, the specifications have been changed to call for heavy duty equipment. However, problems are reported in this study by one responding system.

### Section 16(b)(2)

Prior to October 1, 1988, GDOT administered the UMTA Section 16(b)(2) program. On that date the program was transferred to GDHR. (Program transfer began in February 1988 and continues as of May 1989, as noted previously). GDOT's view of the transfer is that it centered around the obtaining of vehicle insurance. GDOT requires liability insurance of \$100,000 for injury to one person, \$300,000 for injury to two or more persons \$50,000 in property damage for vans with 15 or fewer passengers. For vans with 16 or more passengers the liability requirements are \$100,000, \$500,000 and \$50,000. GDOT also requires uninsured motorist coverage and Personal Injury Protection (PIP) coverage.

Under a 1988 state law, vehicles operated by third party providers under GDHR or GDOT can be covered in the state's self-insurance program if the vehicles are titled to the state.

Privately owned vehicles are excluded by state law. Additionally, state law prevented GDOT from owning the vehicles; however, GDHR has that ability under state law. Thus, GDHR can obtain coverage under the self-insurance program for \$225 in FY89 and \$232 in FY90 per vehicle per year, which is much cheaper than current premiums. Liability insurance is mandatory under the state program. Comprehensive/collision coverage is optional for state owned vehicles. GDHR is requiring this coverage which is available for 5 cents per \$100 vehicle value.

An additional element was the revised UMTA regulations governing the administration of the Section 16(b)(2) program. These regulations called into question the legality of the existing coordination requirements of GDOT. The SIOP (see below) required that the Section 16(b)(2) vehicles be available for general public usages when not being utilized for Section 16(b)(2) purposes. Under the new regulations, this approach was no longer possible.

While Section 16(b)(2) was under GDOT, the department required the county to designate, by resolution, a single private non-profit agency as the service provider/vehicle recipient. Additionally, Section 18 and Section 16(b)(2) vehicles were not allowed in the same county unless there was a Single Integrated Operating Plan (SIOP) in place. The SIOP was submitted by the county to GDOT and required GDOT approval before implementation. The SIOP required assurances that "(1) there is no duplication of services; (2) the service is a cost-effective use of transportation resources and (3) that the service benefits the maximum number of citizens." (13) In this manner, coordination between Section 18 vehicles and Section 16(b)(2) vehicles was assured and Section 18 operating funds could be used to operate the vehicle purchased with Section 16(b)(2) funds. The vehicle would be usable for general public transportation when not needed for handicapped transportation purposes. This arrangement also provided the Section 18 operator with a ready method for meeting the Section 504 requirements.

Under the GDHR arrangement, no planning requirement is made, the county does not have to designate a single provider, vehicles shall be assigned to agencies on a need basis and Section 18 operating funds are no longer available. A more detailed review of the GDHR administered Section 16(b)(2) program is provided below.

Georgia Department of Human Resources

The view of GDHR is to look to people and programs. To GDHR coordination means the movement of people. How you do this is not coordination but vehicle management. Their approach is to look at where the people are and where they need to go and develop a system to get them there, regardless of whose vehicle is used.

In rural Georgia, GDHR believes that much of the rural population is transportation disadvantaged. This includes the elderly, the young, the handicapped and the economically disadvantaged. GDHR's objective is to coordinate transportation services so as to provide the most service, the most economical and the safest service to these people.

A major step in providing this service is marketing. Therefore, GDHR, through its service providing agencies, directs a marketing campaign to the target populations. Since much of this population cannot read, newspapers are not considered to be useful and radio and television are used instead. Additionally, the human service agencies and other service providers, such as medical services, distribute information.

While GDHR has 2,646 vehicles within the department, vehicle management and use is "fully decentralized." This means that program managers determine the procurement, use and disposal of vehicles, generally without regard to other programs. However, the GDHR vehicles are currently at capacity. Thus, GDHR's FY88-89 Plan For Transportation notes that the department "cannot meet all of the transportation needs of its clients." (14) Hence it has a strong interest in achieving transportation coordination with the Section 18 service providers.

GDHR organizational units build their budget requests by expense object, motor vehicles being one expense object. Other service providers or contract agencies develop their budgets around program funding for particular services to be delivered. Such requests may include motor vehicles when justified by program needs. If a vehicle is requested and if it is funded, then the organizational unit or contract provider may purchase a vehicle for their exclusive use.

Programs receiving vehicle purchase funding have tended to be reluctant to allow "their" vehicle to be used by other organizations or to transport other programs' clients. Additionally, service providers generally are not allowed to provide service to the general public given the categorical

nature of their funding sources. Thus, sharing of vehicles by GDHR programs is not a general occurrence. It is reported that the times when clients of different programs share a vehicle is when the transportation service is purchased from another agency or when the same clients are being served by multiple providers.

Service areas under GDHR are established not so much in line with political boundaries (e.g., counties) as by the agency service area. Thus, GDHR has merged and continues to merge agencies into multi-county operations under a single providing agency, normally a Community Action Program (CAP).

Transportation is an important support service to GDHR programs, but it is not the central purpose of the GDHR programs. This understanding contributes to GDHR's interest in coordination. However, much of GDHR is not interested in consolidation as it is viewed as reducing the agency's control and the program's flexibility and effectiveness.

#### Purchase of Service

GDHR reports that it would prefer to purchase transportation services from a Section 18 provider. The potential lower cost is an important element in this preference. Many GDHR programs currently do purchase service from Section 18 operators.

A potential area of difficulty is the matter of charges or fares. GDHR is quite willing to pay whatever fare the general public rider pays, but it does not wish to pay more than the general public rider. However, it would consider paying a higher fare if that higher fare results in a lower cost of service provision relative to the costs of operating their own fleet of vehicles. Thus, lower costs is truly defined in cost terms rather than simply in posted fare terms.

However, coordination is a totally decentralized activity which occurs at the local level. There is no significant or meaningful state level involvement in local coordination or non-coordination activities.

#### Section 18 Capacity

GDHR reports that there have been no widespread difficulties in purchasing service from Section 18 operators due to capacity constraints. While the situation has occurred (one of which is reported in this study), it has been rare and the reason for the capacity problem has been a localized one.

### Vehicle Transfer

At various points during the interviews for this report, the potential for fleet consolidation between a local Section 18 operator and local Human Service Agencies was mentioned. The two major questions surrounding this topic, the ability to utilize Section 18 operating funds and the legality of the transfer itself, have been noted above. At this time, GDHR is not looking at the possibility of vehicle transfer. Most of its vehicles are for program specific usages and can not be legally given away or transferred to another agency. If local agencies wish to transfer vehicles purchased with unrestricted funds (generally locally generated funds) and then purchase service, GDHR has no problem with the agency doing so.

### GDHR Coordinated Service Development

In order to develop a coordinated service, GDHR examines who rides the existing services and where they are going. A needs based pattern for transportation services is then developed. Existing routes which are duplicative are identified and the duplication eliminated. GDHR reports that no one at the state level is doing this task. That they all occur at the local level.

Interagency coordination efforts within GDHR took the form of a Transportation Advisory Committee. All GDHR divisions were part of this group. The FY88-89 Plan For Transportation notes that "in FY87, the Transportation Advisory Committee was redesignated to emphasize the Department's commitment to effective and efficient coordinated transportation. The Division of Administrative Services assumed the administrative lead while other Divisions and Offices appointed representatives to serve on the Committee." (15)

However, GDHR reports that coordination of transportation receives very little attention from the above group. Predominately the body considers matters of accountability, budget requests, safety concerns, allocation of resource matters, vehicle specification and similar topics. This reflects the view that coordination is a local matter and the decentralize nature of the GDHR transportation program.

GDHR vehicles are purchased with state funds from legislative allocation or from program revenue, e.g. retardation workshop program earnings. The only federal funds utilized is through the Section 16(b)(2) program. State funds are reported to be small in amount. Indeed, the FY88-89 Plan For Transportation reports that "70% of the GDHR fleet is six years old or older and qualifies for refurbishment (1,500+

vehicles)." (16) Again providing an incentive for coordination with the Section 18 providers.

#### State Level Coordination

GDHR reports that a state level coordinating body, formed by Executive Order, does exist. The body is the Transportation Coordinating Council and Resources and is composed of the members of the GDHR Transportation Advisory Committee plus GDOT, the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget, the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Department of Administrative Service, the Governor's Office and the Atlanta regional office of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with the Atlanta regional office of UMTA to be added. This body is reported to have not yet met as noted at the beginning of this document.

#### Section 16(B)(2) Program

On October 1, 1988 the Section 16(b)(2) program was transferred from GDOT to GDHR. GDHR is in agreement with the reasons for the transfer of the program as discussed previously.

As to administration of the transferred Section 16(b)(2) program, GDHR plans relatively few changes. Existing Section 16(b)(2) vehicles may be titled to the state at the option of the agency with the vehicle. Most existing vehicles are being title transferred due to the sizable insurance savings which can be realized. Future vehicles will be exclusively titled to the state (all GDHR vehicles are titled to the state). The county will no longer designate a single recipient. However, the application must show effective, efficient operation and coordination with no overlap or competition with existing service. All private non-profits will be eligible to apply for a vehicle.

A new wrinkle which develops due to the titling to the state, is that the vehicles can only be used for official state business. Human service transportation is official state business while general public transportation is not. However, coordination of the Section 16(b)(2) vehicle with a general public provider (Section 18) is considered by GDHR to be a valid and encouraged use of the vehicles, provided the needs of the elderly and the handicapped are not abridged. As long as the vehicle is properly used for program purposes, this coordination does not violate the official state business requirement.

GDHR has not yet developed the system of safety inspections which it shall apply to the Section 16(b)(2)

vehicles. As of the present period, the department may rely upon self-inspection reports and purchased inspections from local mechanics. Similarly, the method by which technical assistance will be provided has yet to be determined, contracting with the APDC's is a possibility.

### System Case Studies

The next sections present the results of two system site visit case studies. Both are Section 18 systems and were recommended by GDOT as excellent examples of coordinated service. The two systems are in different transportation districts, in two different APDC regions and serve two different types of communities. Hall County is a relatively more prosperous community northeast of Atlanta while McDuffie is a relatively poorer community thirty-two miles west of Augusta. Both are served by interstate highways.

#### Hall County Dial-A-Ride

The Hall County Dial-A-Ride (DAR) program is provided by the City of Gainesville under a contract with Hall County which is the funding recipient. The program began service on June 4, 1985. The system currently has ten vans but plans to dispose of two older vehicles (1982 Ford vans); thus, the system will have an on-going fleet size of six vans plus two backup vans for a total of eight vehicles. Of the vans, three are assigned to the full time usage of the Senior Center. Two vans are lift equipped.

#### System Overview

The DAR program is a department of city government. However, its director is an employee of the county.

The system provides demand responsive service with a 24-hour advance reservation. All origins and destinations within Hall County are served.

All vehicles are titled to Hall County and are insured through the Georgia Municipal Association. Insurance is not obtained through the state.

The system also operates four fixed routes. These are predominately employment oriented routes but also include the regional dialysis center and Lanier Technical College.

### Initial System Planning and Development

The initial planning which lead to the formation of Dial-A-Ride was spearheaded by the director of the Community Services Center. At that time the Community Services Center was spending \$35,000 annually to operate three vans for the Senior Center. With a Section 18 program, these costs could be notably reduced. In actuality they fell to \$15,000 once the program was in place.

In addition to the required public hearings, a start up meeting was held to which all social service agencies were invited for their input to the application process. From this grew a solid and productive working relationship with the various social service agencies in the county. This productive relationship continues and contributes to the success of the program. Further, a demand survey of all HSA's was undertaken during the start up planning. There are no Section 16 (b)(2) vehicles in Hall County. Thus, no coordination plan (SIOP) between the two programs was required.

Additionally, site visits were made to the Athens, Georgia system and to Greensboro, Georgia (Greene County). Athens is one of the larger Section 9 systems in Georgia while Greene County is one of the smaller Section 18 systems.

### Technical Assistance

The vehicles are inspected semi-annually by the district representative. The inspection is described as careful, thorough and its timing is flexible. The inspector does not disrupt the program as inspections are done in the morning or the evening (before or after the service period).

DAR speaks very highly of it's district representative, Tom Sexton, and is pleased by their close working relationship. The local APDC (Georgia Mountain APDC) is also highly rated and provides "very good" technical support and attends the quarterly Advisory Committee meetings.

The system prepares its own budget, submits it to the city and to the county for approval and, then, it is submitted to the district representative who submits it to GDOT in Atlanta. Technical assistance is available from the APDC and/or from the district representative upon request.

All operators in this district do meet quarterly. In addition to the operators and the district representative, the APDC representatives attend the quarterly meetings.

The system has access to some research information. This information, mostly statistics, comes from Georgia Mountain APDC. This information has been helpful to the Advisory Council for establishing fares and for other purposes. Information is not received directly from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The system does not attend professional meetings in transportation (other than GDOT sponsored meetings) as GDOT policy does not permit Section 18 funds to be used for travel and local funds have not been requested for this purpose. The system has been considering requesting local travel funds.

### Current System Characteristics

The system operates both demand responsive service and fixed route service. The demand responsive service requires a 24-hour advance reservation and has no trip purpose or destination restrictions. All of Hall County is served by this service. There are four fixed routes which are, predominately, employee oriented routes. Routes are also run to Lanier Technical College, to the regional dialysis center and to general use destinations, such as the shopping districts.

The fixed routes are primarily oriented towards low income housing projects as there is a concentration of persons needing transportation to work from the projects. Many employers are willing to pay for transportation for their employees. This is especially true for domestic workers.

When various social service agency clients need transportation, they are referred to DAR. In those cases where DAR cannot provide the service, the client is referred to Volunteer Gainesville which provides volunteer transportation. This coordinated activity works well and is assisted by both agencies being in the same building (the Social Service Building).

In fact, the Social Service Building is one of the advantages which the system has. In one location is to be found, the Senior Center plus a wide variety of social service agencies, thus providing a high frequency destination for DAR riders and relatively easy interagency contact for coordination and problem solving.

### Fare Structure

The fare structure is established by an advisory committee composed of seven members, three appointed by the city, three appointed by the county and the seventh selected by the six governmental appointees. The advisory committee has broad

community representation including the blind, the handicapped, a county commissioner, a nursing home administrator and two social service agency representatives. This group meets quarterly and is viewed as a very valuable resource by the system.

The fare policy set by the committee is as follows:

\$ .50	1 way under 3 miles
\$1.25	1 way at 3 miles
\$2.50	1 way 3 miles to 6 miles
\$2.50 plus \$ .50	per mile over 6 miles.

Purchase of service contracts generally utilize the standard rates with two exceptions which are noted below.

#### Purchase of Service Contracts

Purchase of service contracts provide valuable revenue for DAR. All local match funds are derived from the city and the county. The purchase of service contracts are reviewed individually below. Each contract differs to some degree based upon the funds the purchaser has available with which to purchase transportation services. Generally, the standard fares are used with two major exceptions which are noted below.

The Senior Center purchases services from DAR for \$15,000 a year, as indicated above. The city and the county pay for the transportation program via a contract with DAR. Thus, local funds provide for the Senior Center transportation. State funds for the Center have been frozen for the past twelve years and federal funds from the Social Service Block Grant and from Title III of the Older Americans Act are not sufficient to cover Center operations and the transportation program.

Guest House, an adult day care program which provides a more structured environment than the Senior Center and also provides some limited medical assistance, purchases services. Community Care Act (a medicaid program) and local United Way funds provide the program's financial resources.

The Girl's Club, a year round after school program and full time summer program for children through teenage purchases services. United Way and local contributions provide the funding for this program. No public sector funds are involved. This program is one of the exceptions to paying the set fare. Due to the large numbers per trip and because all the riders are picked up at one location (the school) at one time, these riders pay a base fare of \$ .35 per one way trip adjusted for distance. This program also has a trust funds which helps to support its activities.

The Department of Family and Children Services purchases transportation using Medicaid funds. Based upon the Medicaid allowable rates, this program pays a \$12.00 base fare plus \$ .40 per mile. This is the second exception to the standard fares.

Lanier Park Hospital Rehabilitative Service provides speech and physical therapy services and purchases transportation services using state and federal funds.

The County Health Department Diabetes Clinic uses state and county funds and perhaps some federal WIC funds to purchase services from DAR.

#### Past Contracts and Other Van Systems In Hall County

The above are the existing contracts. In the past contracts were also undertaken with two other agencies. Ring Industries, a vocational rehabilitative workshop had a contract but it was dropped by mutual agreement. The service requirements of the workshop took too much of the DAR capacity. Thus, the workshop now operates its own vans.

The second previous contract was with the local retardation center. This contract was ended, again by mutual agreement and again for the same reason. The DAR system did not have the capacity to provide the level of service required; thus, the center operates its own fleet of vans.

DAR reports that mental health and all of the HSA's would like DAR to run their systems as they would like to be out of the transportation business. Indeed, the retardation center (mental health) offered to give DAR all of their vehicles, but GDOT and GDHR could not reach an agreement on this matter. Thus, no vehicle transfer occurred. DAR does not know why an agreement could not be reached. Other sources indicate that GDOT would not approve the transfer.

The GDHR reports being unaware that a vehicle transfer had been considered. Such a transfer would have to be approved by the GDHR Office of Support Services and by the Georgia Department of Administrative Services. However, GDHR reports that it could be done. Perhaps, a reexamination of the topic by DAR is in order.

#### System Expansion Limitations

The interagency relationships in Hall County are very positive with a notable absence of turfism. The barriers to system coordination derive from the state, as noted above, and the barriers to system expansion arise from the local

governments, as noted below. The service expansion options follow two main avenues: transfer of GDHR vehicles to DAR or the expansion of the Section 18 purchased fleet. At present, both options are foreclosed.

Meanwhile, DAR is at capacity and is currently turning down requests for rides. Where possible potential riders are referred to Volunteer Gainesville, as noted above.

The system has no expansion plans because the local governments do not want the system to expand. Vehicle replacement is all that is permitted. The county is fearful that the federal funds might end, thus, leaving the county with the entire cost of the program. In such an event, the county would either not fund the program at all or would fund only at the current level. Thus, the county does not want the system to grow beyond what it could afford if there was no federal Section 18 funds. However, the county has no problem with the system undertaking advertising and marketing programs.

The city, on the other hand, has a more restrictive view than the county. The city does not want an advertising or marketing program on the part of DAR. This resistance by the city to program expansion including activities which could lead to increased demand stem from two historical sources.

One of these sources is the complaints from taxi operators which the city has received in the past. Taxi operators felt that paying the city for a business license to operate while the city was funding a competitor (DAR) was unfair. Complaints were filed during the public hearing period for the Section 18 application as recently as 1987. However, the taxi companies were under the impression that DAR was operating more vehicles than it actually was and that there was client/rider competition. When it became clear that the system was not as large as the taxi companies thought and that the ridership bases had very limited overlap, the taxi complaints ceased. An additional factor may have been the offer of the entire system to the taxi companies along with the accompanying paper work. After seeing the Section 18 grant application form, the taxi companies developed a notable lack of interest in the matter.

The second past event which has made the city cautious with respect to public transit was a failed effort by the Georgia Mountain APDC to operate a three county transit service. At the time the City of Gainesville had no school bus transportation program, Hall County did and, therefore, was not impacted by this failure. The APDC rushed a full bus system into place (GAMTran - Georgia Mountain Transit) using 40-foot buses and mixing general public and school bus riderships. The system was incorrectly planned and the routing was poorly laid

out, especially for the general public rider. Thus, the system had very little ridership and was a failure.

This experience made the city uneasy with public transit in general and this is expressed by a low level of enthusiasm for the Section 18 program. The city prefers a low profile Section 18 system.

This low profile view has operating impacts beyond the limitation on expansion. DAR desires to run shopping trips to local malls during the Christmas season. This could be done on weekends and evenings and other off-peak or not regular operating periods. The city has agreed to the service but will not let it be advertised. This advertising restriction appears to defeat the purpose of the special shopping service; thus, it has not been attempted to date.

The system would like to develop more flexible hours of service and expand to meet existing employment transportation needs. For example, there is a demand from poultry and hospital workers for early morning service for 7:00 am shifts. Unfortunately this would require an additional van. Therefore, the service can not be offered.

The city's view of public transit may change over time. A new city manager recently arrived in Gainesville. The new manager has experience in communities with relatively large public transit systems (Athens and Rome which have Section 9 programs).

In the past, GDOT and GDHR has jointly sponsored driver training programs. DAR's drivers found these programs to be very valuable and worthwhile events. However, in 1988, GDOT withdrew from the cosponsored event and the Section 18 drivers were unable to attend. The reasoning given was that the transfer of the Section 16(b)(2) program was consuming all of GDOT's time. Additionally, GDOT cancelled the van rodeo in 1988, even though the bus rodeo was held.

#### Vehicle Procurement

Vehicle procurement must be done through the Georgia Department of Administrative Services. This results in two procurements. First the van must be procured and the complete van is delivered. Next a conversion procurement must be completed and the van sent to a conversion firm. Additionally, the system has no choice of vehicle types or specifications.

One result of this system is very long delays in obtaining vehicles. For DAR, a van arrived on its lot in April 1988 and in September 1988, it was still sitting there, unusable,

because it was still awaiting conversion. This approach can not be said to increase system operating efficiency.

While not directly addressing the specifics of the above case nor explaining the two stage procurement system, GDOT does view this particular case as an "aberration." (17) The objectives of GDOT's centralized procurement are most certainly worthy and worthwhile objectives. As stated by GDOT:

The reason GDOT wanted centralized procurement was to economize on purchase price and to establish uniformity of the fleet in the rural areas. This has been part of the development of a professional service image for public transportation activities, public identification of the service and establishing a base for uniform maintenance assistance. (18)

#### Concluding Comment

In sum, the Hall County Dial-A-Ride program is a well operated and carefully managed system. Unfortunately, the system is not meeting area transportation demand because of local governmental restrictions on expansion and because of state level restrictions on vehicle transfer. Purchase of service agreements are below potential because of insufficient system capacity. Thus, purchase of service revenues, while reported as meaningful and growing, can not reach their potential level either.

This system is less coordinated than it wants to be and less coordinated than it could be because of these external restrictions. Other limitations arising from the inefficient and non-state-of-the-art vehicle procurement system further reduce the effective, on the street, capacity of the system.

These limitations should in no manner diminish the pride which the community rightfully holds for the quality service provide by the DAR system. Rather, they should be used as markers providing indications for needful improvements and changes in the external environment which embraces the system's operations.

#### McDuffie Rural Public Transportation System

The McDuffie County Section 18 program, Rural Public Transportation System, was started in 1985 after the director of the Senior Center was contacted by the APDC regarding the availability of the Section 18 program. At that time, the Senior Center was providing senior transportation with two GDHR vehicles. The interest was present and a three day meeting in

Atlanta regarding the program was attended. The county was educated regarding the program and agreed to develop a Section 18 program in McDuffie County.

The Section 18 program was formed as a county department and enjoys the political support of the local officials. The transportation program director is also the director of the Senior Center. At the time of its founding, the system did receive technical assistance from the district representative and from the APDC. But, the system was the first Section 18 system in the area and had no "role model" to follow. However, everyone worked together (system, district representative and APDC) toward the success of the program.

### Technical Assistance

Current technical support and information derives from the transportation district representative. The district representative, Debra Pennington, is described as "very professional, very helpful and very supportive." While the district representative was given high marks, the view of the local APDC (Central Savannah River Area) was not a favorable one. While phrased somewhat more directly, suffice it to say that the technical assistance provided by the current APDC representative was viewed as extremely non-useful. However, it should be noted that the current technical assistance person is only in the second year of occupying that position and that the previous person was viewed as most helpful. GDOT disagrees with this comment and reports that the Chairman of the Commission has denied that it is correct. (20)

An interesting aspect to the relationship between the Section 18 system and the APDC is that the APDC is required, as the system understands it (by whom is not known to the system), to prepare the system's budget. The normal procedure is for the APDC to consult with the system, prepare the budget, send it to the county for sign-off, send a copy to the system, send the budget to the transportation district office, who, in turn, submits it to the GDOT.

In 1988, the system was not consulted, the county signed the budget believing that the system had seen it and sent the budget to the APDC, who failed to provide the system with a copy. The county did not retain a copy, the system had never seen it; thus, the system was operating without a copy of its own budget. This was discovered when the system asked the county about the status of the budget process. A copy of the budget has since been obtained. An unfortunate result of this is that the system's budget is not currently in balance because various line items do not contain the proper or needed amounts

of funds. A result that could have been avoided if the system had prepared its own budget.

The interesting part of the above is that the APDC is not required to prepare the budget. The contract with the APDC calls for the the provision of assistance with the budget upon request. This assistance can include preparing the budget when requested by the county.

The system reports that the problems noted above appear to be straightening out. The system did prepare its own budget for fiscal year 1990.

The district representative conducts semi-annual vehicle inspections, and performs other duties as described elsewhere in this report. Other assistance is predominately in the form of help with paperwork. The system does not receive the technology sharing publications of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Regular district meetings of operators are reported not to be held in this district. From time to time, GDOT will hold technical assistance workshops. In this district, the sheer physical size of the district restricts the ability to hold frequent district meetings. A recent technical training workshop on cost allocation was held. However, GDOT limited the attendants to sixteen persons in a district with nineteen Section 18 systems. Therefore, several systems had to attend the workshop in other districts.

What may be termed technique oriented technical assistance as well as interaction with other operators is obtained through attendance, by the system director, at a limited number of non-GDOT sponsored professional meetings in the transportation field. However, as GDOT does not permit the use of Section 18 funds for travel, local county funds are used for this purpose.

Within the state, the system director does have the opportunity to meet with other Section 18 program directors in the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) under the umbrella of aging program meetings (there are currently thirteen Section 18 programs in the thirteen county CSRA planning area). The aging programs do meet on a regular basis and most of the Section 18 programs in the CSRA region of Georgia are connected, in some manner, with an aging program.

#### Vehicle Procurement

As noted previously, vehicle procurement must occur according to the procedures and specifications established by the Georgia Department of Administrative Service. These

specifications (the only specifications available to Georgia Section 18 operators) have proven not to be up to actual program usage needs of this system. Replacement of shock absorbers and air conditioning were specifically noted. In general, the system has found that the state specifications do not call for rear ends, shocks, cooling systems and air conditioning systems that are adequate to the actual operating needs of the system. However, it was observed that the procurement program is still new and not all of the bugs are out of the system. This system has not experienced the difficulties reported by the Hall County system with respect to the two stage vehicle procurement process.

In 1987, this system could select from Microbirds, Dodge vans or Ford vans. However, only Dodge vans were available in a 15 passenger version. Currently, the system understands, that Microbirds are no longer permitted and that only vehicles of 15 or fewer passengers are available. It should be noted that while this system had a very positive experience with the Microbirds, most rural Georgia systems did not have the necessary maintenance skills available in their area and, thus, had very poor experiences with the vehicles. Whether or not this is adequate reason to make the vehicle unavailable to all Georgia Section 18 systems is a separate question.

The system also reports extreme difficulties in obtaining warranty service for its Dodge vans. This is reported as a statewide problem with the Dodge vehicles. Indeed, in this case, the difficulties became so severe (the local dealer would not provide any warranty service and the Augusta dealer claimed that none of the service requested was covered by warranty) that the vans are currently serviced by the local Chevrolet dealer.

### System Characteristics

The program currently operates five vehicles (two Microbirds and three Dodge vans). Of these three are predominately utilized by the Senior Center and provide senior transportation. When senior transportation is referenced in this case study, it refers to the services provided in connection with the Senior Center.

The system regularly receives referrals from local physicians, the health department and other social service agencies. The system has good working relationships with other local agencies.

The system vehicles are insured via the county with the exception of the two Microbirds. These are insured through a private insurance agent. The reason for this outside insurance

arrangement is the requirement by GDOT that the Microbirds carry a liability coverage of \$500,000 per vehicle for 16+ passenger vehicles. The county fleet policy has a \$300,000 limit.

The senior vehicles each operate two fixed routes, twice a day. Each of these routes also transport home delivered meals (25 meals per day per route). There are no fares charged to seniors on the senior vehicles. Non-seniors can ride the senior vehicles upon request on a space available basis. Non-seniors are required to pay a fare on these vehicles. Non-seniors do ride on these vehicles.

One vehicle is a demand responsive vehicle. This vehicle operates without trip destination or usage restrictions anywhere in McDuffie County two days a week (Tuesday and Wednesday).

The other three days per week (Monday, Thursday and Friday), this vehicle goes to Richmond County (Augusta, Georgia). Medical trips purposes and the elderly and handicapped rider are given a preference in the out-of-county trips, however, anyone can ride for any trip purpose on a space available basis.

The Augusta trips are fixed route but with flexible destinations in Augusta. In this manner, any rider can get to any desired Augusta destination. The round trip is a full day journey.

The senior vehicles will make short stops on the return trip from the Senior Center for limited shopping. Generally a small shopping center on the way home is utilized.

The fifth vehicle is used for back-up and for "special purpose" trips. "Special purpose trips are group activities planned by various community groups; e.g. group shopping or sight-seeing trips.

Any member of the general public can ride any of the system's vehicles. The general public are placed on the fixed route services and on the demand responsive vehicles. The system reports a substantial amount of general public ridership. These trips are predominately for shopping and medical purposes.

#### Fare Structure

Fares are not mandatory but have been made difficult to avoid. Three fare structures exist: senior vans, McDuffie County trips and Richmond County trips.

Senior vans carry no fare for seniors. Non-seniors on the senior vans pay the fares shown below for trips within McDuffie County. These are round trip fares, one-half fare is charged for a one-way trip.

Non-senior vans fares are shown below and are charged to seniors as well as to the general public when riding these vehicles. Thus, there are four types of fares: fares for senior and non-senior for trips within the city and for trips beyond the city but within the county.

If over 60 years of age, \$ .50 within the city limits, up to 3 miles outside city limits.

If over 60 years of age, \$1.00 if 3 miles outside of city limits but still within the county.

If non-senior, \$2.00 within city limits, up to 3 miles outside of city limits.

If non-senior, \$4.00 if 3 miles outside of city limits but within the county.

Trips to Richmond County carry a different fare structure. The Richmond County service is a door-to-door demand responsive service.

Seniors pay \$2.00 for a round trip, \$1.00 for a one-way trip. Non-seniors pay \$7.00 for a round trip, \$4.25 for a one-way trip. Medicaid riders do not pay directly for their transportation. Fares for these riders are directly billed to Medicaid.

The fares are non-mandatory because Medicaid will pay what the general public rider pays. However, if there is no mandatory fare, Medicaid will pay a higher amount. The fares are non-mandatory precisely to be able to obtain the higher payment from Medicaid. However, the fare "donations" are also difficult to avoid.

The system averages \$150 per month from fares. Most riders are either elderly on the senior vans or are Medicaid paid riders.

#### Purchase of Service Agreements

The use of purchase of service contracts is rather different for this system from that encountered elsewhere. Traditional purchase of service contracts do not really exist. Short term, limited service purchase of service contracts are made with churches or civic organizations. But purchase of

service agreements with other human service organizations are not found.

Medicaid, however, pays the transportation fares for clients of multiple referring agencies. Medicaid will pay for client and escort for medically approved trip purposes, including visits to medical doctors as well as to treatment programs and centers.

Thus, Medicaid functions as a purchasing agent, if you will, for transportation services for multiple human service agencies. In particular, Medicaid pays for the clients of the Department of Family and Children Services, Mental Health and the Dialysis Center.

The Senior Center makes no direct payment for the use of the senior vans. The reason is simple: the Center has no money which can be used for this purpose. However, both the Senior Center and the transportation program are parts of the county government and the county budget. Thus, indirectly, the county provides funds for this service. (19)

A special relationship exists with the local 4-H Club which is part of the county extension service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The 4-H Club needed a van, but not full time. So an agreement was reached whereby the 4-H Club would pay the 10% local match for a van and would utilize the vehicle when it was available. As the 4-H Club's needs for the vehicle are predominately on weekends and at night, which is when the vehicle is not needed for the regular service, the arrangement has proven to be beneficial to both parties.

The 4-H Club provides its own driver. As the driver provided is also a county employee, this arrangement has no impact on the insurance for the system as the vans are titled to the county.

A short term purchase of service contract was developed with St. Joseph Hospital in Augusta. St. Joseph's was undertaking several short term training courses involving exercise and cardiac care. These were evening courses, thus, the existing service to Augusta was not appropriate. Therefore, the purchase of service agreement has undertaken and evening service was provided for the duration of the training courses.

A purchase of service agreement was been developed with the Joint Partnerships Training Act (JPTA) in McDuffie County to transport students to training programs in Augusta. The JPTA program allows \$6.40 per day per student for

transportation. The service is being provided for \$6.00 per day per student, a rate below the standard fare.

#### Other Van Systems in McDuffie County

Other human service agencies in McDuffie County operate their own vans. Mental Health has two vans from GDHR. An attempt at a purchase of service agreement with Mental Health was made. However, when Mental Health saw the price, they decided to start their own system. Since then, they appear to be having second thoughts as they learn the headaches of operating a transportation system. It is thought that Mental Health may reopen the purchase of service discussion once they start having serious mechanical problems with their vehicles.

The Training Center, a mental retardation workshop, operates its own vehicles (two vans are estimated). No other human service agencies in county operate transportation vehicles. Their clients must make their own transportation arrangements. Some ride the Section 18 system, others utilize family or friends. There are some individuals in the county, mostly retired individuals, who provide for-hire transportation.

The Section 18 system reports that the only Section 16 (b)(2) vehicle in McDuffie County is operated by the local Easter Seal office. However, it is used to transport equipment not for passenger transportation. Thus, it was not part of the GDOT required transportation planning process. Hence, the transfer of that program to GDHR will have no impact on people transportation in McDuffie County.

It should be noted that the Easter Seal van was part of a statewide request from Easter Seal for vehicles to transportation equipment to people. This was done at the early stage of Section 16(b)(2) and was considered to be a special case. This remains the only Section 16(b)(2) vehicle in McDuffie County.

#### Expansion Needs and Innovative Service Planning

At this time, the system believes that is it meeting the demonstrated transportation needs and it has a high vehicle utilization rate. The key word is recognized to be "demonstrated" as the system believes that additional needs probably exist, but they have not taken the form of requests for service which exceed the ability of the system to provide. Thus, there are no expansion plans for the basic system.

However, the system is exploring an interesting expansion program called the Correlation of Service. Six counties

including McDuffie currently transport passengers to medical services in Richmond County/Augusta area. All of these vehicles must pass through McDuffie County to get to their destinations. Often the vehicles are carrying a single passenger.

The idea is to use McDuffie as a pooling point for passengers from the other counties (Glascok, Lincoln, Taliaferro, Warren and Wilkes). Two routes per day would depart from McDuffie for Richmond County. The first route would depart McDuffie at 7:00 am and return by noon. The Second trip would depart at 1:00 pm and return by 6:00 pm. This approach would permit greater efficiencies on the part of all participating counties. It is believed that the program can be operated with two additional vans (added to the McDuffie fleet).

The problem which is delaying progress on the proposal is the fare structure. To date no agreement has been reached. As most of the riders are Medicaid, these riders can be funded entirely by Medicaid at \$ .30 per mile. Thus, the counties would have no direct costs for these riders. While this would appear to resolve the problem with the fare structure, one transportation director in Wilkes County will not cooperate nor will he/she withdraw from the proposed program. This has slowed the development of the entire program and created a high level of ill will.

Since the site visit, additional meetings have been held which resulted in Wilkes County taking the position that the proposal would take money from their county. While the cost advantages may or may not have been understood, the county was under the impression that the service would take people to Augusta for shopping trips. While this is not a service that would be provided, a desire not to see county residents shopping out of county on a public funded system is quite understandable. At this point, it appears that the other counties are getting ready to resume discussions without Wilkes. Thus, this proposal for improving service and saving tax dollars may still become a reality.

Another innovative proposal has been given consideration. This proposal involves a purchase of service contract with churches in the thirteen county Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) regional planning area. All thirteen counties in the CSRA have Section 18 programs. The proposal is for the Section 18 vehicles to provide Sunday and Wednesday evening service to the churches. The counties would hire part-time drivers using Senior Aid funds from the U.S. Department of Labor. Thus, no out of pocket costs to the counties are incurred.

Additionally, as the Senior Aids are county employees, no negative insurance impacts are realized.

Upcoming activities include a scheduled meeting of the system director with representatives of the Department of Family and Children Services, the Health Department, the Extension Service, the local hospital and the local nursing home. The intent of the meeting is to share information regarding the system and the transportation needs of the organizations attending, to develop a better understanding of how the system may meet those needs and to lay the ground work for future service agreements. The system already provides some transportation services for most of these organizations. However, the system noted that the hospital was generally unaware of the extent of the services the system was providing. Thus, the informational meeting should be a valuable step in strengthening the ties among these organizations and a forward looking step toward future service arrangements.

#### Concluding Comments

McDuffie Rural Public Transportation System is a small system which operates effectively and efficiently. It provides an example of coordination via funding source, i.e. Medicaid; rather than coordination via vehicles of interagency agreements. Purchase of Service contracts are not the primary coordination method utilized by this system. However, an expanding use of purchase of service contracts is occurring with additional efforts at obtaining such contracts in the planning stage. Therefore, this coordination technique can be anticipated to be of greater importance in the future.

The system's record of efforts at innovation and developing cost saving coordination activities is one that is worthy of special note. This is especially so, because at first glance, the system would appear to have few resources and few opportunities for innovative behavior. Yet, a series of innovative proposals has been noted above. While these proposals have met with a mixed fate, their development is worthy of note.

In terms of barriers to coordination, there is not a particularly clear response to be made. The limited resources available to the system and the limited resources available to the local human service agencies place limits on the level of coordination which is possible.

With only two other agencies providing client transportation, consolidation options are limited, especially given GDOT's limitations on the usage of Section 18 operating funds for non-Section 18 purchases vehicles. While some

efficiency gains and cost savings could most likely be realized by vehicle transfer followed by purchase of service agreements, the size of those gains are unclear given the number of vehicles involved.

Alternatively, it can be argued that since there are only two other transportation providing agencies, that consolidation should be relatively easy to accomplish. And that, while the cost savings may be modest, the county does have limited resources and any savings is to be desired.

However, that consideration may or may not develop, the Section 18 system serving McDuffie County must be given high marks for its innovation and for its continual program of cost effective transportation services.

### Summary Comments

Several items stand out from the above case study findings. These are noted in no particular order of importance.

#### Quality of Personnel

One is rather immediately struck by the sincerity, competence and professionalism of the persons involved with the process. The system personnel, the district personnel and the personnel at the state level (both in GDOT and in GDHR) were uniformly dedicated to providing quality and cost effective transportation services to their target riders. As is appropriate, the emphasis and the particular objectives and/or topics of concern varied by level in the service delivery structure, but the dedication to the goal was present. This is a commendable situation.

However, when there are basic disagreements as to the proper course of policy to fulfill the board goal, then the high degree of sincerity sometimes translates into harden positions, when negotiation is the most productive course of action. There are some signs of this latter result at the state level but not at the system or district levels. The state level situation appears to be moving towards one of greater cooperation and information interchange than existed in the past. This is an encouraging sign.

#### Success of District Representative Approach

Georgia's utilization of transportation district representatives as a primary point of contract and technical assistance for the system operators is an approach believed to

be unique in the nation. The organizational structure advantages are based on the premise that these services must be provided by a substate organization rather than from the capital as is the more common approach. Given this premise, using an existing organization (the GDOT highway district offices) rather than creating a new entity is a compelling approach. Absent this opening premise, the approach is open to question as it places an additional organizational layer between the system and the state administrators. This can lead to unintended miscommunications.

Regardless of the organizational structure considerations, the system works. The district representatives received the highest praise from the operators in this study and the engineers also have the operators respect as professionals and their trust as individuals. These are major accomplishments and strongly argue for the continuation and strengthening of this approach even if it has theoretical weaknesses.

With the growth in the number of Section 18 systems and the growth in the size of the individual systems, coupled with the other duties assigned to the district representatives (they also supervise Section 9, Section 3, Section 8, ridesharing/van pooling and park and ride lots), one can argue that the historical level of well praised service will not continue in the absence of staffing level increases at the district offices. If the clear benefits which the district approach has produced to date are to continue into the future, serious consideration must be given to increasing the district level staffing and to increasing the resources available to that staff.

The counter argument is that the district representatives have all the resources of the district office to call upon, that much of the technical training responsibilities rest with the APDC and that the APDC's function as staff to the district representatives. Additionally, the transfer of the Section 16(b)(2) program is noted by GDOT as a reduction in duties. Even given these arguments, the core conclusion that additional staffing directly tied to the district representative will become necessary if the same service level and service quality is to be maintained appears inescapable.

#### Quantity of Technical Assistance

The topic of technical assistance provided to the system operators is, in many of its aspects, surrounded by fog but, yet, produces a clear result: more assistance is desired. The respondents were quite clear that they had a strong desire for more information. In response on this topic, GDOT points to various workshops and other examples of technical assistance

which it has delivered and it points to these successes with pride. A continual expansion of the types of technical assistance workshops is noted by GDOT. For example, GDOT recently hired a major consulting firm to undertake a cost allocation workshop in each district. Responses from the district and operator level are clear that these workshops were well received and very valuable.

However, consider some of the case study comments which ran to the effect of: the technical workshops deal mostly with changes in forms; we don't get together to share problems; I never go to conferences because there is no money. While it is difficult to demonstrate in an unequivocal manner, one cannot escape the feeling that Georgia's operators sense a need for additional training and operator interaction. Whether an objective valuation would agree or disagree, or whether or not the comments are fully correct, does not alter the perception.

The issue does not appear to be one of the quality of the technical assistance actually received, as much as one of the quantity and the variety of the experiences. The quality of the assistance received normally received high marks; however, a reoccurring comment that was made runs, in various forms, to the effect that "I am sure we could do better if we knew more about what other systems and other states are doing."

These comments should not be taken as implying that the existing technical information program is not of good quality. However, they should be taken as implying that that program may not have sufficient quantity and variety.

#### Section 18 Travel Funding

Directly related to the above comments is the position of Georgia DOT that Section 18 funds cannot be used for travel purposes. This is a restriction which appears to be unique to Georgia and works to isolate system managers from developments in other states and in other systems. The concerns noted above regarding the quantity and variety of technical assistance provided to Georgia systems would be less if those systems could travel to workshops and meetings produced by other states and other organizations.

The reason for this restriction, as noted previously, is to conserve Section 18 funds for operating purposes. While a very commendable goal, it is a choice faced by most states with Section 18 programs. The most common approach is to let the system decide how it will utilize its funds and what allowable expenditures will best serve the system's needs. Currently, the Georgia systems do not have this choice, unless they have local monies.

Thus, under the present travel rules, all technical information must come to Georgia, Georgia cannot go to it. Needless-to-say, this puts a premium on the training that is brought into the state as GDOT has close to a monopoly on the information received by the Section 18 systems. Recall that neither of the systems included in this study were aware of the information distribution system of the Technology Sharing Program of the U.S. Department of Transportation. Utilizing this informational system is, simply put, an industry standard. Both district representatives relevant to this study were receiving information from the Technology Sharing Program and do share the documents received.

While, on the one hand, this situation makes the achievements of the Georgia systems studied more impressive, on the other hand, it makes one wonder what could have been accomplished in the presence of greater information and more peer-to-peer interaction. As the number, size and complexity of the Section 18 systems in Georgia increases, a reconsideration of the present travel policy would appear to be an appropriate consideration.

#### Rarity of Statewide Operator Meetings

While some statewide meetings are reported, they are also reported to be relatively brief, highly focused and permit little time for operator interaction or for operator concern sharing. The absence of a state level transit association contributes to this lack of intra-state sharing. The Section 18 travel matter noted above, also contributes to the concern. The absence of a continual forum for operator interaction in Georgia must be noted.

The two systems studied in this report are in separate transportation districts and in separate APDC areas, their managers did not even know each other's names much less have knowledge of each others systems. Both managers knew other operators in their own transportation districts, but not managers in other districts. While few operators, in any state, know all the other operators, it strikes one as odd that the managers of two of the best coordinated systems in the state, according to GDOT, would not at least know of each other.

#### Underachievement of Potential

Relative to the other states in this study, Georgia has a general underachievement of transportation coordination while there is an existing potential for additional coordination that was observed in both case study systems. It must be recalled that both systems were selected based on the recommendation of

GDOT that they represented the best coordinated systems in the state. While it is true that the coordination that does exist is well done, it is also true that a greater degree of coordination could be obtained. It was reported that specific proposals have been made in the past which would have increased the level of coordination of particular systems. However, these proposals were not accepted by GDOT-Atlanta. While few specific references were made, general statements indicating that more could be done if policies were more flexible, were received. The systems examined both revealed potential for a higher degree of coordination and of service provision.

#### GDHR's Need To Coordinate

GDHR's Plan for Transportation reports the need for wide spread fleet rehabilitation and that the existing fleet can not meet the transportation needs of existing clients. This would appear to be a strong incentive for transportation coordination and for purchase of service contracts. Coordination via purchase of service contracts was found at both systems studied and appears quite successful. However, potential for further coordination, both via purchase of service and via vehicle transfer, was also found.

Yet, GDHR has no state level policy which strongly encourages coordination. Its decentralized transportation system does not lend itself to a centralized coordination policy directive. Yet, the clear benefits to GDHR from coordination cannot be denied. These considerations would tend to argue for the adoption of a pro-coordination policy by GDHR.

#### Evaluation of Coordination

This case study has not produced a model as did the Alabama case study as there does not appear to be any common element which derives from managerial action. Rather coordination appears to occur because HSAs without vehicles buy service from Section 18 systems. Prior to the arrival of the Section 18 system, the HSAs, which are purchasing service, generally, did not have transportation for their clients. Thus, this is not a question so much of developing coordination as it is of there being only one game in town, i.e. the Section 18 provider.

In cases where other vehicles existed prior to the Section 18 program, they generally still exist. In some cases, HSAs have developed fleets after the Section 18 program arrived because the Section 18 provider could not, for a variety of reasons, meet the HSA's particular service requirements. The question must arise: Is this, in fact, coordination? Or is it a public sector version of transport for hire?

This is a rather basic question without a clear answer, especially as there are several versions of what constitutes coordination. This approach seems more a coordination of funds via purchase of service contracts than the ending of duplicative services through either purchase of service or fleet consolidation. Either of which are valid coordination objectives.

While the financial coordination via purchase of service contracts is most certainly a valid form of coordination, the study data still suggest that a solid policy thrust towards coordination is missing. This sense is one of the nebulous things that are more apparent by what is absent than by what is present. For example, the absence of a functioning state level body for on-going communication regarding coordination matters and the setting of state level policies that encourage coordination in some coordinated inter-departmental manner, leaves a vacuum which raises the question of the degree of commitment of GDOT and GDHR to coordinating their activities.

However, the entire matter is complicated by the general absence of GDHR vehicles in the two case study counties prior to the formation of the Section 18 program. The currently existing GDHR vehicles have explanations as to why they are not coordinated with the Section 18 provider, whether completely logical explanations or not, they are none-the-less explanations. Thus, it is hard to say that all possible/practical coordination has not been achieved when an uncoordinated system did not truly exist to begin with.

Hence, one is reduced to highly challengeable senses of what is possible and, in some cases, of what in fact is. And the sense that cannot be escaped is that more could be done at the local level if the state level had more flexible and/or different policies.

An example, which may or may not be revealing, is the matter of vehicle transfer. In the Hall County case, the transfer was refused at the state level. While the operator understood the GDOT policy, the operator had been lead, by GDHR, to believe that the differences could be worked out. Why they were not worked out is not known to the operator. If the transfer would have saved GDHR's agency money and if both GDOT and GDHR were fully committed to coordination, it is not unreasonable to believe that some arrangement, perhaps a lease rather than transfer, could have been worked out. At the very least, a full explanation to the local agencies should be routine. However, to complicate the matter even more, GDHR-Atlanta reports having no knowledge that such a transfer was requested, but, reports that it could have been worked out. This implies that the transfer refusal came solely from GDOT

and was not a joint decision. Perhaps this is an atypical situation and too much should not be made of it. But, it does imply a lack of state level inter-departmental coordination at the time of the requested transfer. Regardless, it was an opportunity for coordination which was missed for no known reason.

The coordination which has been achieved in Georgia is positive and should be commended. However, it is also necessary to recognize that underachievement in coordination is also a reality. This is supported by the number of incidences reported in the two case studies of purchase of service contracts not undertaken, for a variety of reasons, and innovative coordination opportunities not (or not yet) realized.

The local respondents report the absence of turfism or other local inter-agency problems which, in other locations, have been a major barrier to coordination. The financial resources are reported to be available to accommodate fleet expansion and operations. Why then are coordination opportunities missed and underachievement realized? By process of elimination and allowing for some local oddities, the path leads to the state level and to the two major state level players: GDOT and GDHR.

GDOT reports a policy of encouraging coordination but not of requiring it directly. The indirect approach of an assumed or presumed inability to meet the service criteria in the absence of coordination is the vehicle utilized. If coordination is a strong policy goal of GDOT, this is a remarkably passive approach.

GDHR reports that coordination is entirely a local matter as vehicle procurement and operation is heavily decentralized. While stating in its Transportation Plan that it cannot fully meet client needs, and that its fleet is in need of wide spread rehabilitation, it has no state level plan or effort to utilize the existing Section 18 resource as a source of mobility via coordination efforts. Given the self described GDHR transport problems, some definite pro-coordination policy would not seem to be an unreasonable position for GDHR to take.

If GDOT and/or GDHR actually want coordination among their service providers, then they should adopt more aggressive policies for obtaining that result. It would seem reasonable that such an approach would include an active state level coordination body that actually functions.

Based on the case study results, two particular GDOT policies need to be clear and consistent through time. These

policies are the policy on vehicle transfer and the policy on the use of Section 18 funds to operate vehicles purchased from differing funding sources.

If these policies are to encourage a greater degree of coordination then vehicles should be transferable in some appropriate manner and Section 18 operating funds should be usable for all vehicles engaged in Section 18 service delivery regardless of vehicle capital funding source. Much more appears to be achievable at the local level if the local operators have the consistent support and assistance of the state level departments.

Given the categorical nature of much of GDHR's funding, and the diversity of their programs, the lead on this matter is probably best taken by GDOT. GDOT has as much to gain as GDHR but has the more flexible resource base with which to work. Additionally, the major vehicle for coordination in Georgia continues to be the Section 18 program, which reinforces this view.

Georgia produces instruction for other states in how to develop limited but successful and valuable coordination at the local level within a constrained environment. The use of purchase of service contracts is a valid coordination method and works well in the case study systems.

The present relatively passive policies at the state level also produces instruction for other states. However that instruction is in how not to get very much of what you say you want.

## END NOTES

## SOURCES:

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1987 Georgia Transit Fact Book, Bureau of Public Transportation, Georgia Department of Transportation, 1987.

## NOTES:

- (1) Stanley, September 19, 1989, pages 1-2.
- (2) Stanley, June 12, 1989, pages 1-2.
- (3) Ibid., page 2.
- (4) Ibid., pages 2-3.
- (5) Ibid., page 3.
- (6) State Management Plan, page 8.
- (7) Ibid.
- (8) Ibid., page 9.
- (9) Stanley, June 12, 1989, page 4.
- (10) Ibid., page 4.
- (11) State Management Plan, page 7.
- (12) Transit Fact Book, Table 39, page 63.

- (13) State Management Plan, page 6.
- (14) Plan for Transportation, page 1.
- (15) Ibid., page 7.
- (16) Ibid., page 11.
- (17) Stanley, June 12, 1989, pages 6-7.
- (18) Ibid., page 6.
- (19) Ibid., page 7.
- (20) Ibid., page 8.



## CHAPTER FIVE: THE NORTH CAROLINA CASE STUDY

### Introduction

This chapter reports the results of the site visits to systems in North Carolina as well as the activities occurring at the state level. The state level activities are reported first, followed by the results of the three system site visits and, then, the conclusions and implications drawn there from.

### State Level Coordinating Body

State level coordination in North Carolina is accomplished through the Interagency Transportation Review Committee (ITRC) (see Appendix C). The ITRC was established by Executive Order in 1978 and has been renewed on a regular basis by Executive Order since that time; however, the most recent Executive Order expired May 15, 1989. Currently, the Executive Order establishing the ITRC is being updated and is expected to be reissued in the near future. (The most recent Executive Order is reproduced in Appendix D).

The ITRC is composed of representatives from the North Carolina Departments of Administration, Community Colleges, Economic and Community Development, Education, Human Resources, and Transportation. The Committee is chaired by the Director of the Public Transportation Division of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (PTD-NCDOT) or his delegate and staff support is provided by the PTD-NCDOT.

Under the ITRC process, each county is required to have a formally adopted Transportation Development Plan (TDP). All TDPs require some level of local coordination of transportation services. The PTD provides technical assistance and funding assistance for the development of TDPs. Each TDP is the result of a local planning process and the resulting TDP must be adopted by a local governing body. Thus, each TDP is viewed as being implementable and workable from the local perspective.

All requests for capital funds are submitted to the ITRC using a transportation addendum form (Appendix E). Technically, the request is an addendum to the TDP; hence, the name of the form. The PTD staff reviews the addendum for consistency with the approved TDP. If consistent, the staff recommends approval of the request. If the request is inconsistent with the TDP, non-approval is recommended.

The transportation addendum requests information regarding the source and amounts of funds being utilized to provide transportation services. This provides the ITRC with knowledge of the amounts of funds from various sources which are being used for transportation purposes in North Carolina. Since only the Public Health and the Head Start programs are outside of the ITRC process, North Carolina has a rather complete inventory of financial resources devoted to public transportation in the state. This information is not available in a centralized form in the other states in this study.

Thus, the state attempts to obtain coordination of transportation services via the coordination requirements of the TDP and via the ITRC funding approval process. A locally approved TDP is a prerequisite for funding under NCDOT-PTD administered programs. However, nothing in the process prevents a refused applicant from obtaining capital funding from outside the ITRC process, such as local funds or non-public funds, and purchasing the capital equipment anyway. While the ITRC has the authority to cut off operational funding in such an event, its practice has been not to do so and to continue working with the agency with the long term goal of obtaining the sought for coordination. Over the long term, the process has tended to work well and the level of coordination in the state has increased over time.

The ITRC process developed from a 1978 Working Paper of the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Committee which identified several options for increasing the level of coordination among transportation providers in rural and small urban areas in the state. One of the barriers to coordination identified by this group was the absence of a uniform application procedure and application time line. Given the different fiscal years and application deadlines of the numerous funding programs operating in the state, a uniform application deadline was not a practical alternative. However, a uniform process with a centralized application review body was. Thus, the ITRC process was developed to bring together the multiple applications of the various funding sources under a common scrutiny.

While this report focuses upon coordination with Section 18 transit systems, it is worthwhile to note that several North Carolina counties operate fully coordinated systems using only Section 16(b)(2) funds. The Section 16(b)(2) funds purchase the vehicles while purchase of service contracts from human service agencies and other service generated revenues, such as fares, provide the funding for operating and administrative activities. Alamance and Rowan Counties are examples of coordinated Section 16(b)(2) systems in North Carolina. Unfortunately, these systems cannot be examined as part of the present study.

Matching Ratios For UMTA Programs

Beginning in July of 1985, NCDOT began the phase out of Section 18 operation assistance. After that date any new starts received only administration and capital assistance under the Section 18 program. Existing systems began a phase out of Section 18 operating assistance. Thus, some of the systems reported upon herein fund operations 100% from local funds, predominately fare revenues, while some were still receiving 10% Section 18 operating assistance at the time of the site visits.

As of July 1, 1990, none of the systems in this report will be receiving Section 18 operating assistance. The matching ratios and policy of PTD-NCDOT as of the above date will be to provide 25% of the net operating deficit from Section 18 funds for fixed route systems with predominately general public service. Demand responsive services providing predominately HSA service will receive no operating assistance from Section 18 funds. The state has also provided systems of the latter type with a goal of obtaining 10% of their ridership from the general public.

There were no state funds for operating assistance for any type of service until the passage of the Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program in July of 1989. Approximately 75 of North Carolina's 100 counties receive funding for elderly and handicapped transportation under this program. The requirements of this program are detailed in Appendix E.

Administrative funding for all types of Section 18 programs will continue at the present 80% Section 18, 10% state and 10% local matching ratios. However, the capital assistance matching ratios as of July 1, 1990 are 60% Section 18, 20% state and 20% local funding.

The above changes have become necessary given the strong growth in Section 18 systems in North Carolina and the very limited growth in Section 18 funds. In the past, surplus Section 9 carry-over funds have been transferred in to the Section 18 program, \$1.5 million was transferred in 1989. However, due to growth in the Section 9 systems, the surplus has been expended. Indeed, beginning in 1990, Section 9 systems will only receive funds for operating purposes as Section 9 funds will no longer be used for capital purposes. The state hopes to provide system capital needs through a Section 3 application which is to be submitted in July 1990.

PTD Technical Assistance

The PTD provides a wide array of technical assistance to all public transportation operators in North Carolina. This ranges from basis information on available programs provided to communities considering the development of public transportation to detailed operating and financial management assistance for existing operators.

The tightness of funding noted above has been anticipated for several years. In anticipation of such an occurrence, the state has been moving North Carolina's Section 18 operators to fully allocated costing techniques and cost effective service provision methods. This has been done by means of technical training for accounting systems, including uniform accounting procedures, centralized vehicle procurement, coordination training and assistance, maintenance procedures and the similar cost reduction, cost allocation and billing training dating back to 1979 and 1980. Thus, state provided technical assistance has a long history in North Carolina. Indeed, all of the respondents to this study spoke very highly of the technical assistance provided by the state, both in terms of assistance provided directly to the respondents system and in terms training provided at state level meetings.

Kerr Area Rural Transit System

The Kerr Area Rural Transit System (KARTS) serves a five county area through a combination of fixed route (KARTS uses the term set route) and demand responsive service. The thirty-five (35) vehicle fleet provides in excess of 10,000 one-way trips per month and serves Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren counties in the northern Piedmont section of North Carolina. Seven vehicles are lift equipped with two tie downs each.

The system began operations in four counties (Granville, Person, Vance and Warren; Franklin joined the system in July 1984) on October 1, 1983 with vehicles leased from local human service agencies (HSAs). These vehicles constituted the fleet for the first two years of operations. During the third year of operations, the vehicles were rehabilitated using UMTA funding and their titles were transferred to KARTS as per NCDOT regulation. All vehicles are now KARTS owned.

While KARTS began operations in 1983, the studies which led to its' formation date to 1976. The 1976 Rural Transportation Study by the Kerr-Tarr Regional Council of Governments (COG) examined commuting patterns in the full five county area. Another study of transportation needs was completed by the COG in July 1977 (Region K COG Transportation Plan). A September

1981 study, Kerr-Tarr COG Region K Transportation Review Plan was conducted by Harland Bartholomew and Associates. All of these plans/studies recommended coordination and consolidation of human service agency transportation with a general public transportation which would have to be developed (i.e. no general public service existed at that time).

The final study/plan which led to the actual creation of KARTS was the Region K Transportation Plan issued in July of 1983. This report followed a year long planning period and recommended a regional transportation authority be established as a private non-profit organization. This approach presented several organizational and operational advantages. Among these could be counted:

- \* The Authority would not be a "political body" and; thus, would have greater freedom in conducting its day to day operations;
- \* The Authority could deal directly with NCDOT on behalf of all of the counties in the service area; and,
- \* The Authority would still be "politically accountable" as its board of directors would be appointed by the county commissioners of the counties served by the system.

This system has, in practice, worked well. The Board of Directors is composed of two representatives from each county appointed by the County Commissioners in each county. One representative must be a local government official and one must be a human service agency representative. None of the cities in the five county service area is represented on the Board as no city provides funds, either directly or indirectly, towards the operation of the system.

To-date each county has appointed a commissioner to be the governmental representative and the appointed commissioners have been active participants in the governing process. The Board began with eight members, but expanded to ten when Franklin County joined the system. Franklin County had been included in all of the previously noted studies, but wanted to see if the system would actually work before it joined, nine months after the inception of KARTS.

Five years after the 1983 Region K Transportation Plan, the system revised the plan and produced the 1987 KARTS Transportation Development Plan (TDP). The name of the planning effort and document was intentionally changed from Region K COG to KARTS TDP in order to give the system a separate identity from the COG, since the Transportation Authority does stand alone.

System Operations

In the beginning the system had two major difficulties to overcome with respect to the human service agencies in its service area. The first was convincing the HSAs that KARTS would be sensitive to needs of the HSA clients. The second was overcoming the HSAs desire to have a van immediately available (i.e. in their parking lot) when they desired to use it.

Hence, from the beginning, KARTS has had passenger sensitivity training for their drivers. The training was conducted by the HSAs whose clients were being transported. This approach was very valuable in meeting the client/passenger treatment concerns of the HSAs. On time performance of the system worked to overcome the reluctance of HSAs to give up the van in the parking lot.

In general, the initial difficulties have been overcome by being trustworthy, performing the transportation service in a timely and professional manner that meets the needs of the HSAs and by being sensitive to the particular needs of their clients. This concept of building trust by being trustworthy is one shared with other successful coordinated systems examined in this report.

The system began service with vehicles leased from existing HSAs. When KARTS began service Vance and Warren Counties had no system and no vehicles, some service and vehicles did exist in Person, Franklin and Granville counties. Vehicles were leased from Person County (6 or 7 vehicles) and from Area Mental Health (8 vehicles). These vehicles were used to start the service in the original four county area. As agencies were added, the system also added vehicles. Thus, most of the existing service in the now five county area is new or greatly expanded relative to the pre-KARTS service level.

As noted above, the system currently operates 35 vehicles: two 24 passenger buses, two 17 passenger cutaways, one 9 passenger van and thirty 14 passenger vans. Seven vans are lift equipped with two tie downs each. These vehicles provide in excess of 10,000 trips per month on average (in August 1988, 13,327 one way trips were provided). Most trips are within the five county service area, as noted below; however, three days a week, three 14 passenger vans travel outside of the service area to Durham and Chapel Hill, NC for medical services unavailable in the five county area: mostly dialysis and chemotherapy. These are all day trips; thus, the system will not transport high risk maternity clients who can not safely withstand a full day journey.

The system provides both demand responsive and fixed (set) route services. The set routes are operated for various HSAs,

some daily, some weekly, but all on a set schedule and set route. These set routes occupy the morning and afternoon hours with demand responsive service being provided during the hours in-between. However, this does not mean that a demand responsive request can only be fulfilled in-between the set route times.

Demand response service requests require a 24-hour advance reservation. Where possible, these riders are placed on an existing set route, otherwise a van is sent to provide the service. This has required some time of travel flexibility on the part of riders. However, after some initial education, the riders understand the capacity limits of the system and have been quite cooperative and understanding on this matter.

The system is open to both general public and agency client riders; however, the majority of riders are HSA clients. General public ridership has been growing as the program becomes better known and understood and as system capacity has increased. General public work trip requests are generally turned down due to vehicle capacity limitations - the morning set route vans are normally full. Otherwise, few trip requests are turned down; even though, some must be changed to a different time of day when vehicle capacity is unavailable at the requested time.

The system operates a state wide 800 toll free telephone number. This service has saved money on cancelled trips. Additionally, for the first 2-3 years, KARTS had no radio system; thus, the 800 number was the only method for drivers to contact the main office.

In each of the five counties (except as noted), the following set routes are operated:

- \* Aging - service to senior centers and luncheon sites;
- \* Area Mental Health - 9 routes to the regional workshop in Henderson, NC from all counties except Person;
- \* Adult Day Care - 2 vans to the Henderson center from all counties except Person;
- \* Person Mental Health for Orange, Person, Chatham Mental Health (OPCMH) a three county service organization;
- \* Person Industries, a vocational workshop, four routes per day serving 69 clients on four vehicles;

- \* Counseling Center Therapeutic Preschool, four days a week, serving two different client groups two days a week each;
- \* Person County: Children's Learning Center - summer only - a preschool to older ARC clients (Association for Retarded Citizens); Person County school system provides service during the school year;
- \* Granville and Warren Counties - disabled school children transportation;
- \* Out-of-service-area trips to major medical facilities are made three days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) for dialysis, cancer treatment, heart problems and other specialized medical services. These trips are paid by the sponsoring human service agency and/or by the client.
- \* Vance-Granville Community College - students in the Human Resource Development program, part of JPTA, college pays for transportation.

Demand responsive service is provided to local doctor appointments, shopping, to pay bills, for recreational purposes and to human service agencies to request service benefits. This demand responsive service is available in all five counties.

The agency sponsoring the client/rider pays for the transportation service. The billing is computerized and is based on actual costs per mile and per hour. In 1988, the average one way trip bill was \$1.71. (See below for more detail on billing and charges).

Currently KARTS is working with all of the HSAs in their five county service area. With the exceptions noted below, KARTS is providing all of the transportation services for all of the HSAs within the five counties.

The Person County Group Home provides its own transportation. The Home houses border line Willie M's and it was felt (by both parties) that these clients should not be mixed with other riders.

HealthCo is a private sector health care provider of low cost medical services to low income persons in Vance and Warren Counties. This organization operates 2 or 3 vans. HealthCo felt that they could operate the transportation service cheaper than KARTS as all of their service is not within the same county. Periodically, KARTS contacts them to offer a contracting opportunity; but, to date, they have not responded.

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) operates a van on a demand responsive basis to the Veterans Administration Hospital.

Head Start also operates their own vehicles. However, in the past, KARTS has provided this service under contract utilizing Head Start vehicles and drivers. This contract is treated in more detail below.

### Vehicle Maintenance

In the beginning, KARTS provided their own maintenance in a garage facility on site. However, the facility was limited in the services it could provide. The garage had no lift and raised roof vans would not fit into the facility. The system feels it did a "fair" job of maintenance; however, it was too expensive to operate given the very limited facility. Rather than build a more complete facility, the system decided to contract maintenance to the private sector. The system is pleased with this arrangement.

### Part-Time Drivers

With the exception of three drivers who were grandfathered in from other agencies at the creation of KARTS, all drivers are part-time and work an average of 6-7 hours per day. These drivers are paid only for driving time and their schedules are arranged so that they receive at least 35 hours per week. Any earned annual leave time is paid rather than taken as paid vacation. This puts the drivers closer to a 40 hour week and eliminates having to schedule paid vacations.

### Contributed Labor

In one contract, the contracting agency provides the drivers. Under such circumstances, the agency is only charged the cost per mile for service. This approach is exclusive to Mental Health contracts. The KARTS operations manager meets with these drivers twice monthly to review any operational changes, any problems and to obtain feed back from the drivers. This approach works well for both parties as the drivers are responsive to KARTS safety and pre-trip checks requirements. (This approach did not work for the Head Start contract as noted below).

Service Contracts

Each agency has its own particular needs with respect to the service required. Thus, the basic contract document is modified by contract attachment to tailor the transportation services to those unique agency needs.

Rates for service are computed on a cost per mile (CPM) and cost per hour (CPH) of service basis as determined by the Uniform Public Transportation Accounting System (UPTAS) specified by NCDOT. All line items in the operating budget are divided between CPM and CPH. These are then totaled and divided by the total number of miles and the total number of hours provided for all services. The agency is then billed the full local share of the operating costs. Under current NCDOT regulations, the local share is 90% with the remaining 10% being provided by UMTA Section 18 funds. The local governments do not pay any operating funds directly to KARTS. All local funding for operating expenses comes by way of an HSA.

The most common basic contract form is for a set route. These contracts specify the cost per vehicle mile and the cost per vehicle hour. For agencies that do not have enough riders to constitute a set route, contracts containing zone fares are used. The agency is billed per round trip based on the appropriate zone fare. Zone fares are derived from the CPMs and CPHs of the actual inter-zonal trips.

All contracts are year to year. The contract revenues are built into the system's budget projections. When a non-contracting agency has a transportation need that does not require a set route, the system has been able, so far, to handle the additional clients as incidental riders and work them into the existing system.

All contracts are completed by April for a June approval by the KARTS Board. If there have been any service delivery problems which have not been previously corrected, they are raised at this time and corrective action is taken.

Few problems are raised at contract renewal time due to an on-going system of regular contacts with the HSAs. The operations manager is in regular contact with the HSAs to learn of any problems and to provide prompt corrective action should any arise. Additionally, the executive director makes regular site visits to the HSAs. This process of staying in touch and communicating information on how to make the service better and how to correct any problems which may arise is viewed as an important factor in the smooth and cooperative relations with the HSAs in the five county service area.

Invoicing is computerized. For billing purposes, service is cut off on the 25th of each month and billed by the first of the following month with a due date of the 15th of that month. So far, there have been no problems with this system or with on time payment by the HSAs.

### Private Taxi Companies

The taxi companies operating in KARTS service area are all small Mom and Pop type operations. At first the creation of KARTS scared them a bit with respect to the potential for lost ridership. However, those concerns have passed as the taxi operators continue to have as much business as they can handle. Thus, they are not interested in providing contract service to KARTS.

### Private Sector Management

KARTS did circulate a Request for Proposals (RFP) for private management of the system. However, there were no actual bids as the private management companies could not provide the service cheaper or better. Some did propose the provision of technical assistance. However, the system receives all necessary technical assistance from NCDOT and had no need for additional such services.

### Head Start Contract

KARTS had a contract with Franklin-Vance-Warren Opportunities (Head Start) from the start of the school year in 1984 to the end of 1985. The contract operated with Head Start leasing vehicles to KARTS and the contributed labor drivers were Head Start employees not KARTS employees. This contract endured numerous problems during its life time.

A major problem was the vehicles provided by Head Start. Under this topic two major problems can be identified. First, the requirement that the school bus vehicles could not be used for transporting other passengers eliminated coordinated use of the vehicle except during the summer when Head Start did not operate. The second major vehicle problem was the physical condition of the vehicles. While KARTS had the opportunity to inspect the vehicles before accepting them, KARTS failed to do so. Thus, it was stuck operating 1962 Fords without fire wall protection, no seat belts, no window or door handles and holes in the floor underneath the gas pedals. Needless-to-say, these vehicles were very expensive to operate.

The second major problem was with the Head Start contributed labor drivers. Under the agreement, the Head Start drivers were so well protected that they could not be made to follow KARTS safety and pre-trip check regulations nor could

they be made to turn in their paper work on a timely basis. These failures produced at least one blown engine due to no oil in the engine. Oil level is part of the pre-trip check required of KARTS drivers.

Over all the service was very expensive to operate, in fact KARTS was losing money on the contract. Additionally, KARTS had all of the administrative headaches and could not use the vehicle for other passengers except during the summer.

However, the contract was terminated at Head Start's request. Head Start was able to obtain funding from USDHHS for new vehicles, but only if they directly operated the vehicles. They could not obtain the funds if the vehicles were operated by another agency under contract. KARTS views this contract as a learning experience and these mistakes have not been duplicated. It is worth noting that this problem and similar events have occurred in many North Carolina counties.

#### Technical Assistance

KARTS does not receive technical information directly from USDOT. The primary source of technical assistance is NCDOT. However, the system does attend workshops and meetings in and out of state, including the transportation training workshops conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee University Outreach technical training program. Networking with other systems and with class members from the Wisconsin training sessions are also on-going sources of technical information. The work of the Transportation Accounting Consortium coupled with assistance from local CPAs are noted as valuable forms of assistance. As no two systems are alike, KARTS has an on-going interest in learning from what information is available and then adapting it to fit the particular needs of KARTS.

#### Lessons Learned

When asked if the system would be created if it had to be done again, the answer was a very positive yes. The system provides more service than was available before. It provides a better quality service and the service is provided at a lower cost than before. When many HSAs were enduring budget cuts and increasing transportation needs, KARTS was able to hold down the cost of transportation for these agencies while expanding service.

However, at least two major errors would not be repeated. The first was attempting to expand too rapidly. If had to do again, the system would establish a schedule for service expansion rather than attempt to provide service immediately upon request. The lesson here is that one must be clear on what

one can do and only promise what can be delivered and don't promise more than can be done within a particular time frame.

The second major error was in pricing. Originally, fares were set at one-fourth of actual cost. Thus, the system was in financial trouble from the start. So much so that the counties had to loan KARTS \$45,000. The loan has been repaid and the rates were increased in the second year of operation and again in the third year. Thus, by the third year, rates were in line with actual costs of providing service. Hence, if doing it again, the system would price its service correctly from the very beginning.

While this has not been a particular problem of KARTS, the system did emphasize that it can not be all things to all people and that this must be understood by everybody up front. The system should concentrate on doing what it does well and not attempt to do everything.

#### Anson County Transportation System (ACTS)

The Anson County Transportation System (ACTS) operates four vans, one of which is lift equipped, one 26 passenger bus and has one backup van. All vehicles are radio equipped. The system provides over 20,000 trips per year and travels approximately 100,000 miles per year. The service is predominately demand responsive; however, some fixed routes are operated.

Anson County is a low density, rural low income county in the south-central piedmont section of North Carolina bordering on South Carolina. The county has 25,649 people (1980 census) spread over 533 square miles (48.1 persons per square mile). The county seat of Wadesboro is the largest city in the county and contains approximately 4,000 persons. With the exception of a fixed route service to the sheltered workshop in Richmond County (McLaurin Center), all service is within Anson County.

The system's origin dates to 1979 when a former county manager learned of the Section 18 program. The former county manager was especially interested in targeting service to low income and elderly and handicapped individuals. During 1979-1980, the county investigated the possibility of starting a Section 18 funded transportation program. The system started in 1981 on what has been described as a "trial and error" basis. No formal planning was undertaken. An informal TDP was developed by the Pee Dee Council of Governments.

At the time of system start up, the county was paying for the operation of two vehicles. One van was operated by the Council on Aging and one vehicle was used to transport clients

to the McLaurin Center. Other than a few private taxi companies, there was no general public service and no medical trip service available in the county.

In 1981 the system purchased three vans under the original Section 18 grant. The Council on Aging van was transferred to ACTS and was used as a back up vehicle. The vehicle used for service to McLaurin Center was sold by the county. In 1983 an additional van was purchased. The 26 passenger bus was purchased in 1985.

The system has received strong support from the Anson County Commission from the beginning. The few remaining private taxi operators do not bid to provide any of the service provided by ACTS as they do not desire passengers who need assistance. However, they do sit on the the ACTS Advisory Committee and they do attend the meetings. The agencies receiving service from the system are also supportive and cooperative. Thus, the system enjoys wide spread community support.

The system is a separate department of county government. Thus, system employees are county employees.

The system receives no operating subsidy from the county. Hence, the fare structure is designed to permit the system to capture 90% of operating costs from fare revenues. The remaining 10% is funded with Section 18 monies. Administrative and capital expenses are funded on an 80% Section 18, 10% state and 10% local basis. No funds are received from the city.

The system does not contract per se with human service agencies. The agencies sign a contract agreeing to pay the stated fares if they use the service. Thus, the contract is an agreement as to the fares to be paid and not a commitment to use the system.

While most of the system provided service is demand responsive with a 24-hour advance reservation requirement, some fixed route service is provided. The system operates service to nutrition sites in the Wadesboro area for the Council on Aging. The fare for this service is \$1.70 round trip. During the return trip shopping stops are frequently made, an additional fee of \$ .50 is charged for each such stop. The system also provides medical trips on a demand responsive basis for Council on Aging clients. The Council on Aging uses Title III funds to pay for trips to nutrition sites and Title II(c)(1) funds for local medical trips.

Service to the McLaurin Center, a multi-county sheltered workshop, involves a total of four vehicles. Two vans serve the western part of the county and one van services the eastern part of the county. These three vans then meet at the Pee Dee River

and transfer their passengers to the 26 passenger bus. The bus then transports the clients to the Center in Hamlet, NC (Richmond County). The driver of the bus works at the Center; thus, the bus spends the day in Hamlet. The process operates in reverse for the return trip. Vocational Rehabilitation buys trips to the McLaurin Center at \$5.75 per round trip. For other McLaurin Center clients, the county, through ADAPT and the Sandhills Mental Health Center, pays \$3.75 per trip with the client paying the remaining \$2.00 per trip. The county spends approximately \$19,000 per year on this service. Some general public utilize the McLaurin service and pay the \$5.75 per round trip fare.

Fares for elderly or Council on Aging trips other than those noted above are \$4.50 per round trip if the trip is in the City of Wadesboro or no more than 1 mile outside the city limits. Trips beyond the 1 mile perimeter have a fare of \$6.50 per round trip.

The system also provides service to Sandhills Mental Health Center, a multi-county service provider. The clients pay a \$2.00 per round trip fare for this service. The Center does not contribute to these transportation expenses; however, the County pays \$3.75 per client per day.

Service is also provided to the Morven Medical Center, a private organization providing general medical, dental and pharmacy services. The fares are paid by the Center.

In 1987, the system provided transportation services to the Exceptional Children program. However, in 1988, the program received an appropriation from the state and purchased its own vehicle.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) makes only limited utilization of the system. It purchases individual rides on an as needed basis. Recently the Department of Social Services established a committee to assist AFDC recipients in job placement and day care placement for the children of those for whom employment is obtained. As part of this process, the Department examined various transportation options, including greater utilization of ACTS. It is anticipated that ACTS will be providing a higher level of service to DSS AFDC clients beginning in September 1990.

Currently the system is providing service to Anson Technical Community College for one student. The student is blind and travels with a seeing-eye dog. The fare for the 18 mile round trip is \$10.00. This is a new service and the system is just beginning to advertise it in hopes of obtaining additional student riders.

One worker van pool to Revel Lumber Company is operated in conjunction with ACTS. Two other worker van pools are in the development stages. The ability of the system to develop such pools is being used as an industry recruiting tool.

The system is planning on developing regular to/from work trips in the future. Current efforts are delayed because current vehicle rehabilitation work is running behind the anticipated schedule.

The system has attempted to develop a coordinated trip to Monroe in Union County for dialysis patients. However, service can be purchase by private automobile for \$ .25 per mile while ACTS service costs \$ .65 per mile.

Payment for services billed is accomplished with Vocational Rehabilitation by remission of a check which is deposited into the Transit Revenue Line Item maintained by the county. For Council on Aging services, a Journal Voucher transfer is submitted to the county which in turn transfers funds from the Council on Aging account into the Transit Revenue Line Item.

Cash fares are handled by the drivers using a card system whereby the driver writes the trip information, the passenger's name and the fare on a card. The cards and the cash are turned into the system secretary who matches up all of the records and the cash. Relatively little cash is actually handled by the system. This approach works well for ACTS.

ACTS received \$15,802 from the Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program. These funds have benefited persons who "fall through the cracks" of other funding programs. Predominately these individuals have been handicapped persons who do not qualify for transportation assistance through existing aging grants.

Currently ACTS is developing a method for coordinating services with Richmond County. Richmond County will be starting a transportation program in July 1990. ACTS and the new Richmond County system will coordinate service from Anson County to the McLaurin Center in Richmond County. While the details of this coordinated effort are yet to be finalized, the ultimate result will be improved service and saved money and transit time for ACTS riders who utilize the McLaurin Center.

ACTS is a relatively small system operating with relatively few resources. However, it does provide a relatively substantial level of service at a fairly modest cost. The opportunities for coordination of service are relatively limited as the number of human service providers is relatively small.

Stanly County Umbrella Services Agency (SCUSA)

The Stanly County Umbrella Services Agency (SCUSA) was originally formed in the late 1970's to coordinate human service agency responses to an increased level of community based alternative care programs. Transportation was not an issue at the time of SCUSA formation. The SCUSA Board contains representatives of all HSA agencies in Stanly County.

SCUSA began transportation services in 1986 and currently provides transportation service for all of the HSAs in the county. The first Section 18 application was filed in March 1986 and the system began operation on July 1, 1986. Organizationally, SCUSA is a department of county government.

Prior to the development of the transportation function, all of the agencies were operating their own transportation services. They paid their own drivers and their own insurance. At approximately the same time, the agencies realized that their vehicles were wearing out and they had no replacement monies. Additionally, service needs were expanding beyond the capacities of the existing vehicles. Further, the ARC's umbrella insurance policy was cancelled by the insurer because of the transportation program. Thus, there were strong incentives to finding a joint approach to providing transportation services. As the agencies had a long history of working together and had developed mutual trust bonds, it was a relatively simple matter of exploring alternative methods of delivering the service.

At this time, the two major transportation providers were the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) which provided approximately 95% of the handicapped transportation and the Department of Social Services (DSS) which provided most of the elderly transportation. The only lift equipped vehicle in the county was operated by the ARC. Mental Health was operating two vehicles part time; however, both vehicles were wearing out and the agency wanted out of the transportation business.

The first approach to a coordinated transportation program was the utilization of Section 16(b)(2) funds for vehicle purchase. Under this approach the ARC would handle all vehicle coordination. However, there were no matching funds available for vehicle purchase.

The next approach was to establish a Section 18 system. Again, the availability of matching funds was a difficulty. However, Mental Health, ARC and DSS agreed to take cuts in their county appropriations with the funds being transferred to the transit program. This approach generated the necessary matching funds, placed no liability on the county for operating funds and actually saved the agencies money as the allocation reductions were less than they were spending on transportation and

insurance. The County Commission agreed to the arrangement on the condition that if they did not like the way it worked out, they could cancel it. The Commission is now very pleased with the program and it is no longer a trial program.

The ARC completed the first Section 18 grant application. The program is now a separate division within SCUSA and has a Transportation Committee. The SCUSA Board is an Advisory Board which is composed of 23 members. Of these, 16 are from HSAs and 7 are appointed at large by the County Commission. The governing board of the transportation program is the County Commission.

The system owns 15 vehicles, one of which is leased to another agency full time. Thus, the system operates 14 vehicles. Four vans and 1 bus are lift equipped.

All rates/fares are set by the SCUSA Board. Thus, all agency users of the system have input into establishing the rates they will be charged. This sense of agency "ownership" of the system along with the long history of inter-agency cooperation is viewed as a major reason for the excellent relationships that the system has with the HSAs that it serves.

Users of the system are billed by the hour and by the mile. Current rates are \$ .28 per mile and \$5.66 per hour, if a system driver is used. User charges provide the entire operating cost of the system.

Fares for the general public range from \$1.00 to \$5.00 per one way trip depending upon distance (the county is divided into four zones ranging outward from Albemarle). General public riders can travel on any of the seven fixed routes operated by the system on a space available basis. Additionally, demand responsive service is available with a 24-hours advance reservation. Such service is available to both general public and agency riders.

The fixed route system built upon the route structure originally established to serve the ARC sheltered workshop. It proved to be an excellent set of routes upon which the system could build to expand service. Vehicles tend to operate at capacity on the fixed routes. Fixed route service begins as early as 6:00 am and all fixed routes end by 8:00 am. The return trips begin at 4:00 pm and end by 6:15 pm.

In between the fixed route service, the system operates demand responsive service. Some of the demand responsive service is to set destinations, such as the Partial Hospitalization program operated by mental health, but with varying riders (origins). Different parts of the county are served on different days of the week by the demand responsive

service. SCUSA also provides transportation for the local YMCA for their afterschool care program.

The fixed route system is comprised of seven routes that cover all of the county except the western part. The western county service has been attempted but has a very expensive service (\$10-\$11 per trip). Thus, the system now operates a pickup point in the western part of the county. The system plan to place a satellite van in Locust to serve that part of the county.

One fixed route serves parts of Cabarrus and of Montgomery Counties with transportation to the Stanly Industrial Services. Otherwise, all routes are within Stanly County.

The system provides the Department of Senior Services (SSD) with 8,900 units of service on a demand responsive basis. SSD contracts for the use of a SCUSA van for a fixed route service. All scheduling and dispatching for this service is handled through the SCUSA office. The van use for this service is driven by a SSD employee; upon need SCUSA provides an additional van and driver. SSD is charged mileage for the van when driven by their driver. When a SCUSA driver is used, SSD is billed per hour plus mileage; however, when the SSD driver drives for SCUSA, SSD receives a per hour credit. By this method, the van placed with SSD remains part of a coordinated transportation system.

SCUSA employs two full time drivers and five part time drivers. Three of the part time drivers are also employees of the ARC workshop. Thus, they drive the workshop fixed routes. This was the arrangement when ARC was the transportation provider and was transferred to SCUSA when it accepted the transportation responsibility.

Relations with local taxi companies are very positive. The taxi firms were involved in the establishment of the SCUSA transportation function. SCUSA has established a voucher system with the local taxi firms to provide elderly and handicapped service during the early morning and late evening hours or at other times when eligible riders cannot be worked into the daily SCUSA schedule. This service is funded with state monies provided under the Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Fund which allocates monies for this purpose directly to each county in North Carolina. These monies became available in November of 1989. Additionally, the taxi firms have called upon SCUSA to provide transportation for some of their clients.

Mental Health transferred title of a van used by its Partial Hospitalization program to SCUSA. The vehicle remains at the program site and SCUSA is paid mileage when the vehicle is used.

The SCUSA experience is one of a smoothly developed coordinated system which builds upon an existing history of inter-agency cooperation and upon an existing ARC route system. The notable absence of turfism stems not only from the history of inter-agency cooperation but also from the realization by the agencies that SCUSA can provide the transportation service at a lower cost than could any individual agency. Additionally, the agencies had a history of providing the service, were knowledgeable of the problems of providing service and did not want them anymore. All of these factors combined to produce a highly coordinated system providing service to all HSAs in Stanly County as well as to the general public.

### Concluding Comments

The North Carolina coordination experience is a combination of top down and bottom up activity. The state took an early top down leadership role through the coordination requirements of the TDP and the ITRC and through the technical assistance provided by the PTD-NCDOT. However, the state probably used more carrot than stick in this process, realizing that coordination works only when the parties involved want it to work.

At the other end of the service delivery spectrum are the service providers who were searching for ways to maintain and/or expand services in an era of limited and, in some cases, diminishing resources. This led to a bottom up desire to find methods to coordinate service.

Combining the two incentives has produced a high level of coordination throughout the state of North Carolina. The systems reviewed above, while excellent systems in their size ranges, are as much the rule as the exception in North Carolina.

However, this is not to say that all coordination in North Carolina has been achieved without difficulty, nor is it to say that all service is coordinated. Some areas still prefer to operate duplicate systems and others merged or coordinated service only when no other financial choice remained.

The existing high level of coordination of Section 18 systems has been achieved over a decade by means of smoothing the process via technical assistance, inspiring the process via financial incentives and, lately, inspiring the process by means of financial disincentives to non-coordination. This same process produced the coordinated Section 16(b)(2) systems which have been noted but not reported on in this study.

The system level lessons observed in North Carolina are similar to those observed in the Alabama case study: trust is

the foundation for all successful coordination. The Section 18 provider must provide a reliable and trustworthy service that is sensitive to the particular needs of the HSA riders and the program needs of the agencies. The particulars provided in this chapter and in previous chapters point to a variety of specific approaches to building the necessary trust and confidence. Communication and a sense of ownership of the service by all parties involved are common and essential elements.

At the state level a major observation of importance is the value of long range planning which permits system behaviors, i.e. coordination, to be changed over time without disruptions and ill will which often accompany sudden change. By beginning the process very early, the state have been able to lead operators to a coordinated result on a gradual basis and at a speed which corresponded to local realities and needs. The provision of technical assistance, the coordination requirements of the TDP and the existence of the ITRC are all critical elements in this successful process.



## CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### Introduction

This report has reviewed the local coordination efforts of eight rural public transportation systems in three southeastern states. Additionally, state level policies and coordination activities have also been reviewed. As befits a field that does not have a standardized definition of coordination, no two systems or states do exactly the same thing, nor do they achieve the same results, through they all term the result "coordination." However, an examination of the varied experiences reported herein does yield some common and/or rather similar themes and approaches to obtaining this result called coordination.

At this point it is appropriate to review several key common elements as well as to note important differences in the approaches examined. Interestingly enough, the sharpest differences occur at the state level while the, perhaps more pragmatically oriented, local system level approaches have several key common elements. While common local system level elements will be noted, only in Alabama were there sufficient common elements across systems that one could use the term "model" with any meaning.

### State Level Considerations

Of the three states examined, North Carolina has a long established state level coordinating body (ITRC) and a high level of coordination state wide; Georgia, apparently, has no state level coordinating body and has the lowest degree of coordination of the three states examined; during the course of this study, Alabama moved from having no state level coordinating body to having one modeled on the North Carolina ITRC. However, even in the absence of a state level coordinating body, Alabama, assisted by a supportive Highway Department, achieved a level of coordination very similar to that observed in North Carolina.

Thus, the state with what appears to be the most smoothly functioning and most widespread levels of coordination is also the state with the oldest state level multi-agency coordinating body: North Carolina. The concept of working for coordination over the long run rather than forcing a quick coordination effort appears to have paid off in North Carolina. Importantly, North Carolina treats the Section 18 program as a vehicle for uniting a community's transportation resources into a single provider; thereby attempting to maximize the total amount of transportation services possible given the available resources.

The same approach has been successfully applied to the development of coordinated systems utilizing Section 16(b)(2) vehicles absent any Section 18 service. This is the closest to a top down (state level to local level) approach to developing coordination as is to be found in this study.

Alabama has a different history and a decidedly different tone in the manner in which it has developed coordinated transportation systems. Without a state level coordinating body until very recently, many local communities in the state came together, with the encouragement and assistance of the Alabama Highway Department, and developed multi-county coordinated systems. This development flowed not from any grand philosophical design, but from the pragmatic perspective of fulfilling the mobility needs of the local citizenry. The state realized that to further encourage and to enhance local coordination, state level interagency coordination was required. Hence, the development of a state level coordinating body. Thus, the Alabama approach is very much a bottom up (local level to state level) development of coordination, with the state level body being made possible by both the success of coordination at the local level and being made necessary by the need to expand and enhance those local efforts.

Georgia has a philosophical approach that differs from the other states examined in this study. That approach emphasizes the general public service aspects of the Section 18 program rather than the human services aspects. It treats Section 18 more as a stand alone program than as an umbrella program or as a vehicle for meshing transportation resources from multiple programs into a single provider. Thus, while endorsing coordination, Georgia has not realized the same level of coordination in practice as the other case study states. This is not because Georgia cannot do so, rather it is because Georgia does not believe the Section 18 program should serve that purpose. Thus, the philosophical difference in the view of the proper role of the Section 18 program at the state level has produced different results at the local service level; a lower degree of coordination and more duplicative service.

These observations appear to lead to two important findings. First, that encouragement of coordination at the state level is of major importance to the achievement of local level coordination. Second, that the presence of a state level coordinating body is a highly helpful but not an absolutely required element in the achievement of a basic level of local coordination. However, a higher degree of coordination is possible in the presence of a state level coordinating body. In cases where local turfism is strong, local coordination probably will not be obtainable without a state level coordinating body and a state level coordination mandate.

The above approach utilizes the Section 18 program as a focal point for bringing together the transportation resources of a community. This has been the North Carolina and the Alabama approach and relatively high levels of coordination have been produced. Meanwhile, Georgia has taken a very different view of the proper usage of Section 18 funds and, thereby, restricted the range of coordination options available to the local operators; hence, producing the lowest level of coordination observed in this study.

However, the Georgia view of the proper role of Section 18 funds cannot be lightly dismissed. The key interpretative matter is whether human service clients are or are not members of the general public. In a very narrow sense (the sense that says they are not), it can be argued that only Georgia is actually operating entirely within the letter of the law with respect to Section 18 funds usage. Alternatively, it can be argued that Georgia's interpretation of the program is too narrow given the intent of Section 18. This interpretation argues that these clients are members of the general public.

North Carolina seems to have implicitly recognized this difficulty by setting two different levels of Section 18 operating funding (25% UMTA funding for fixed route general public systems and zero for human service systems) and by establishing a goal of 10% general public ridership for the human service oriented systems. While the operating match differential may be argued based on limited funds availability, the second concern noted does not lend itself to a funds availability justification.

Thus, an apparent inherent difficulty in the objectives of the Section 18 program appears to be illustrated by these two states. If the narrow definition of the Section 18 program is followed, then coordination levels decrease and total transportation expenditures (from all sources) are not minimized. If the broader definition of Section 18 is followed, then higher levels of coordination are realized and transportation services received from all funding sources are maximized. Given the language of Section 18 of the UMTA Act, the federal mandates for coordination and the stark reality of inadequate federal funding, the broader definition of Section 18 better meets the service objectives of the rural public transportation program. However, changes in the language of the Section 18 law may be of value in securing these advantages for the long run.

Local Level Considerations

The key word for successful local level coordination efforts is trust, both personal and institutional trust bonds were found to be key elements shared by all of the successful coordinated systems examined in this study. Trust was built and maintained by performing as promised, by being sensitive to the special needs of agency clients and by being responsive to concerns and problems raised by human service agencies.

Various trust building techniques have been utilized by the case study systems. A key one is not promising more than can be delivered. Several systems examined herein experienced initial difficulties by generating high expectations of more rapid service improvements than reality permitted.

A variety of institutional arrangements found among the case study systems have proved valuable in developing institutional trust bonds by maintaining open and well utilized communications channels. One of these approaches was to associate the transit system with a well established and trusted neutral agency, i.e. not an existing transportation service provider. This approach was used by NATA by associating the transit service with the existing local council of governments. Another approach was utilized by SCUSA where the transit function was added to an existing agency comprised of all human service agencies in the service area. Thus, all institutional users of the system also participate in its governance. A variation that utilizes parts of both of these approaches is shown by NATS where a separate governing board was formed representing institutional users of the system while the system was operated by the regional mental health agency, an existing service provider that had broad based institutional trust.

Passenger assistance technique training is a partial response to concerns regarding transit agency sensitivity to the special needs of various human service agency clients. Passenger sensitivity training, which is becoming more common, is a valuable additional training approach to ensuring that HSAs have the confidence that their clients will be properly treated by the transit provider. One successful approach to this concern found in the case studies was to have the human service agencies conduct sensitivity training sessions for the transit system drivers (KARTS utilized this approach).

A common problem among the case study systems, which had no clear answer, was the welfare image often associated with human service oriented transportation services. The provision of home to work van pools and other work or education oriented services seems to help lessen this welfare image by expanding the types of trips provided beyond the typical human service

agency designations, two such efforts are noted below. Additionally, NATA's association with a non-human service agency (NACOLG) is believed to have helped reduce the welfare image problem.

As noted in the beginning chapter of this report, coordination comes in several forms, ranging from what was termed institutional ridesharing to full consolidation. However, for all forms, the common financial element was the purchase of service contract. Most commonly these entail payment on a per trip basis with fares and sometimes routes determined by contact. Normally, such contacting was associated with regular usage of the transportation service. However, in some cases, contracts were agreements on fares and not a commitment to utilize the service (ACTS) or not a commitment to utilize a specified level of service.

Another practice observed in several case study systems, most especially the Alabama systems, was to begin service with regular routes designed to serve existing human service clients. Thus, with an assured ridership, the systems were able to reach out to the general public rider along those same routes and/or to build predominately general public routes with the surety of a human service ridership base. However, as noted above, the welfare image of the basic human service system has retarded growth in the general public ridership.

Working from the human service ridership base, several systems (NATA and ACTS for example) have begun to build work trip and post-secondary school trip routes for general public riders. NATA has utilized a van pool approach while ACTS is attempting to develop regular route service to the local community college and to particular employment sites.

A somewhat surprising finding was the general absence of technical assistance in the development of the systems studied. The predominate source of start up technical assistance for the systems studied was their state DOT's. It was the rare system (KARTS for example) that had any notable level of pre-start up technical assistance or needs/system planning assistance other than that provided by the state DOT. It should be noted that much of the printed technical information provided by the state DOT's was the product of federally funded research and was obtained by the state via the USDOT's information distribution networks.

As to post-start up technical assistance, all systems reported receiving various levels of technical assistance from their state level agencies; however, few regularly received publications from the federal government, indeed, some did not even know of the existence of the USDOT's technical information sharing networks. Those systems were entirely dependent upon

their state DOTs to supply copies of the federally produced technical assistance.

All case study systems did attend in-state and out-of-state (Georgia systems excepted) professional meetings and technical training workshops on a fairly regular basis. Thus, technical information and peer-to-peer information sharing does occur.

All systems spoke highly of the technical assistance provide by their state governments. Yet all stated a need and a desire for more technical training and assistance. The systems examined tend to heavily rely upon training provided by state DOT's and/or state transit associations. Out-of-state travel to national conferences was fairly common, though not always routine, among the Alabama and North Carolina systems studied. In the case of Georgia which prohibits the use of Section 18 funds for travel and which has no state transit association, the systems are completely dependent upon GDOT provided assistance, unless they have local funds for professional travel, which was generally not the case.

A distinction needs to be made here between pre-start-up technical assistance and post-start-up assistance. The technical assistance received and the peer-to-peer sharing that has been noted above, predominately occurred after the systems were up and operating. To some extent this observation is the result of timing, in that many of the systems examined herein were among the first to develop coordinated Section 18 programs, i.e. they started up when there was limited technical information generally available. However, this does not fully explain the continuing absence of non-state provided technical information observed in many of the systems studied. A lack of knowledge of the various national technical support and information sharing networks was present in many of the systems studied, especially the Georgia systems.

### Concluding Comments

Several different approaches to coordination have been explored in this report. Examples of all three of the definitions of coordination ventured in Chapter One are to be found among the case study systems. Common elements at the local system level include:

- \* Building personal and institutional trust bonds;
- \* Sensitivity to rider/client needs;
- \* Being reliable and not promising more than the system can deliver;

- \* Purchase of service contracts as the interlinking financial arrangement;
- \* Building the system from a human service client ridership base;
- \* Need to overcome the welfare image of a human service rider based system;
- \* Heavy reliance upon state DOT provided technical assistance; and,
- \* A stated desire for more technical assistance and training.

At the state level, the key element is the attitude of the state department of transportation. In the states where coordination is strongly supported at the state level, higher levels of coordination were observed. The presence of a state level coordinating body is a valuable asset to achieving coordination; however, a supportive state attitude combined with a local desire to coordinate can produce results similar to those found in the presence of a state level coordinating body. But, in the long run, a state level coordinating body and mandate is a necessary feature if all available transportation funding is to be coordinated at the local level, especially in cases of strong local turfism.

In terms of the states in this study, the above observation is illustrated by North Carolina which achieved a high level of local coordination using a state level coordinating body as its major tool towards that end, and by Alabama which achieved similar results without a state level body, but with a state highway department which encouraged local agencies to follow paths that enhanced their own transportation service levels. By adding a state level coordinating body, Alabama will further advance this process and should begin to overcome remaining agency turfism considerations. Georgia's different philosophical view of the Section 18 program limits potential coordination levels, but raises potentially troublesome questions regarding the entire process of using the Section 18 program as a primary vehicle for local transportation coordination.

At some point, this inherent potential conflict between the interpretation of the Section 18 program and the federal mandate to coordinate must be addressed. The funding reality in most locations is that coordination of human service clients with the Section 18 program is necessary if adequate levels of transportation service are to be provided and that coordination is necessary if maximum efficient utilization of available transportation funds is to be achieved. Based on the data

found in this study, the narrower the view of the definition of what is permissible under Section 18, the lower the level of coordination and the lower the level of transportation services actually provided. The broader the definition, the higher the degree of coordination and the higher the level of service provided.

Regardless of the above consideration, the case study systems reviewed herein demonstrate that coordination is a process and an result which has many faces. There is no one path to coordination nor is there one result that is "coordination." Rather, coordination must be defined in terms of a set of goals: service goals, financial goals and ridership goals. Then a service delivery system which meets these locally established goals and which fits with local institutional realities must be designed. A coordinated system cannot be superimposed upon a community, it must be a home grown product. Hopefully, this report contains useful insights and techniques for developing an appropriate home grown coordinated product.

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APPENDIX A: ALABAMA EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 29

The Honorable Guy Hunt, Governor

WHEREAS, the Alabama Highway Department, Alabama Department of Human Resources, Alabama Commission on Aging, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Medicaid Agency, and Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation administer State and Federal funded programs, many of which may be used directly or indirectly to provide needed transportation for recipients of human services; and

WHEREAS, these programs incorporate varying amounts of public funds furnished by Federal, State and local governmental units; and

WHEREAS, human service vehicles in some cases are not being used efficiently or effectively as possible and, therefore, are unable to provide the transportation needs of their clients; and

WHEREAS, the administrative policies and procedures of these several State government agencies greatly impact on vehicle usage and the delivery of transportation services at the local level; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for a statement on coordination of resources and these State departments and agencies are in a strategic position to bring about better use of transportation resources; and

WHEREAS, there are resources of public transportation such as transit systems, intercity carriers, specialized service and limousines available to provide transportation services; and

WHEREAS, it should be the policy of the State of Alabama to support and utilize wherever practical existing transportation resources, public and private, before any new resources will be made available through public funds; and

WHEREAS, it should be the policy of the State of Alabama that departments and agencies supported by public funds fund existing providers if the provider is willing, able and agreeable to furnish the proposed transportation in a cost-effective and coordinated manner before funding new public transportation programs; and

WHEREAS, the providing of transportation services can support the attainment of balanced growth in Alabama.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

- Section 1. The Member Agencies: Alabama Highway Department, Alabama Department of Human Resources, Alabama Commission on Aging, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Medicaid Agency and Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation; shall cooperate in the creation, disposition of the duties; staffing, and otherwise support the success of the Review Committee as described herein.
- Section 2. Federal or State agencies outside the jurisdiction of this Executive Order which fund transportation are encouraged to join the Member Agencies as members of the Review Committee pending their agreement to follow the policies, procedures, and decisions of the Review Committee.
- Section 3. There is hereby created the Alabama Interagency Transportation Review Committee (AITRC). The Review Committee will be composed of Representatives from the Member Agencies. The Lead Official of each Member Agency shall appoint the representative from their Agency. The Director of the Alabama Highway Department or his designee shall chair the Review Committee.
- Section 4. The Review Committee shall have the following duties:
- (1) To review and make recommendations to the Member Agencies concerning guidelines and criteria for the review and approval process operated by the Review Committee;
  - (2) To implement policy and apply criteria as approved by a majority of the Review Committee Member Agencies;
  - (3) To review all transportation components of applications or plans requesting transportation funding when the funds are administered by a Member Agency;
  - (4) To provide written notice of recommendations based upon review of applications or plans to the appropriate State agency;

- (5) To review and make recommendations to the funding agencies concerning project situations when there are unresolved problems between the Review Committee and the applicant or other local interests;
- (6) To develop transportation policies which are consistent with balanced growth and budget constraints; and
- (7) To advise and make recommendations to the Alabama Highway Department concerning public transportation policy.

Section 5. The Alabama Highway Department shall provide the planning, technical, and administrative support for the Review Committee.

Section 6. When the Review Committee's decision is appealed or when the Review Committee cannot reach consensus, the Director of the Alabama Highway Department, after conferring with the appropriate departmental Lead Officials of the Member Agencies, shall have the final authority on all transportation funding decisions under the jurisdiction of the Review Committee.

Section 7. To further the objectives of the Executive Order, Member Agencies shall immediately draft directives and procedures necessary to implement these policies. Such drafts shall be submitted to the Director of the Alabama Highway Department for review and approval within 60 days after the Review Committee has approved guidelines and criteria for review, but in no case shall this be after 180 days of the signing of this Executive Order.

Section 8. Every agency within State Government within the Governor's authority is required to cooperate with the Review Committee in providing all necessary information regarding their activities.

This order shall become effective immediately upon the Governor's signature.

DONE AND ORDERED this 28th day of April, 1989

Guy Hunt  
Governor



## APPENDIX B: APDC RESPONSIBILITIES (GEORGIA)

- I. Workshops
  - A. Hold Quarterly
  - B. Send out Questionnaire to assess needs
- II. Site Visits Monthly To All Programs
  - A. Check Stats
    - 1. Monthly MIS
    - 2. 500\*
    - 3. 120\*
    - 4. .5\*
  - B. Check Reimbursements
    - 1. Check Math
    - 2. Check 80/20
    - 3. Check Balance
  - C. Ride Vehicles
  - D. Check Cleanliness (in and out) and Tires
  - E. Talk to Drivers, Passengers, Project Director
  - F. Work on Routing and Scheduling
  - G. Check Funding Sources
- III. Check For Park & Ride Sites
- IV. Assess Ridershare Need For Local Business and Industry
- V. CSRA Billboard PSA's
- VI. Keep RPT Image In The Forefront; Go To Commission Meetings
- VII. Applications
  - A. Offer Technical Assistance

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation, Bureau of Public Transportation

\*These numbers are references to the Service Criteria standards reviewed in Chapter Four.



APPENDIX C: NORTH CAROLINA INTERAGENCY TRANSPORTATION REVIEW  
COMMITTEE

Policies, Practices, and Procedures  
of the  
Interagency Transportation Review Committee

I. Purpose

The Interagency Transportation Review Committee has been established for the stated purpose of implementing the policies and directives of the Public Transportation Advisory Council. The Committee provides a review of all requests for transportation funding when such funding is administered by an agency of the State of North Carolina. It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to support and utilize wherever practical existing transportation resources, public and private, before any new resources are made available through public funds.

II. Membership

The Review Committee shall be composed of representatives from the North Carolina Departments of Education, Human Resources, Natural Resources and Community Development, and Transportation.

The Secretaries of the respective departments may appoint one (1) representative from each funding source and one (1) alternate. Representatives appointed to the Committee should be involved in and have some authority over the subrecipient budget review.

The appointed representatives shall service an undesignated term or until replaced by the respective Secretary. Each representative shall have one (1) vote.

The Secretary of the Department of Transportation, or his delegate, shall chair the Review Committee. The Chairman shall have one (1) vote in the event of a tie vote among the Review Committee. The Department of Transportation shall provide the planning, technical, and administrative support for the Review Committee.

The responsibilities of an ITRC member include ensuring that local agencies are aware of the agency guidelines for purchasing capital with various types of funding. The representative should also be available to work with NCDOT in encouraging local agency participation

in the process for developing a Transportation Development Plan.

In addition, ITRC staff will notify members when agency funding is proposed for capital expenditures prior to DOT approval of the local Transportation Development Plan.

The responsibilities of ITRC staff include reviewing funding requests in accordance with the approved Transportation Development Plan for the area. ITRC staff will make recommendations to the Committee based on information submitted on the transportation addendum and the approved Transportation Development Plan.

### III. Committee Review Responsibilities

The Review Committee shall review all components of applications and other budgetary submittals considered as state agency applications and utilized for passenger or client transportation, based on recommendations made by staff to the Committee and summaries or areawide plans. The ITRC staff will provide a summary of the Transportation Development Plans for each county.

- (a) Review Criteria. The Review Committee shall review all requests uniformly to ascertain the degree to which the applicant agency meets the following State goals and objectives:
- (1) to encourage the provision of transportation services that are available to the general public;
  - (2) to encourage the participation of private sector transportation providers in service delivery;
  - (3) to better coordinate transportation services at the local level;
  - (4) to promote efficiency and cost effectiveness in the delivery of local transportation services;
  - (5) to promote the accessibility for mobility impaired individuals to all local transportation systems;
  - (6) to develop the necessary programs and operating policies to assure the safe transportation of passengers; and

- (7) to encourage the preparation of local Transportation Development Plans that outline the effective use of all existing transportation resources, both public and private.
- (b) Committee Recommendation. The Review Committee shall provide a favorable recommendation to all applications for transportation funds that are consistent with a local Transportation Development Plan, approved by the Department of Transportation and endorsed by the appropriate local governing body. In areas where agencies are requesting operating funds, and a Transportation Development Plan does not exist, subsequent funding will depend upon participation in completing a TDP for the area.

The Chairman of the Review Committee shall provide written notification of the Review Committee's recommendation to the funding agency. The recommendation will include, when necessary, detailed information, e.g. name of lead agency, contact person and telephone number; status of the local Transportation Development Plan to enable the agency to comply with the recommendation of the ITRC. If the agency does not concur with the recommendation of the Committee, the agency may request the Review Committee to reconsider its recommendation. An agency requesting such action shall present supplemental information, documentation, or other information necessary for the Committee to re-evaluate its recommendation.

When there is an unresolved issue concerning a Committee recommendation, the Chairman shall refer the issue to the Public Transportation Advisory Council for resolution.

#### IV. Review Process

- (a) Review of Non-State Administered Funds. When agency funding is not administered by an agency of the State of North Carolina, the following procedure applies.
1. Upon notice from the State Clearinghouse of any agency's request for transportation funds, ITRC staff will contact the agency directly to determine how client transportation is provided and the level of transportation coordination with other human service agencies in the area.

2. Results of the review of the funding request and any comments will be provided for Committee members.
- (b) Review Committee Notification. ITRC representatives should distribute the transportation addendum to local agencies for completion prior to agency funding decisions for the upcoming fiscal year.
- (c) Review Period. Staff to the Committee shall prepare and present a recommendation for all addenda received five (5) days prior to a scheduled meeting of the Review Committee. This recommendation shall be provided in writing.

Recommendation(s) on addenda are usually presented to the Committee in one of the following categories:

1. Consistent with the TDP: The agency is providing transportation in a manner consistent with the locally approved Transportation Development Plan (TDP).
2. Request Agency Participation in TDP Update Underway: The agency's service area is in the planning process to develop or update the TDP. All human service agencies must actively participate on the transportation steering committee in the development of the TDP for the area.
3. Deferred Agenda: The agency's funding request was previously reviewed by the Committee, but action was deferred pending additional information regarding the agency's transportation program.
4. Vehicle/Lease Purchase Requests: The agency's funding request includes the purchase or lease of vehicles for use in providing client transportation. Vehicles used specifically for staff travel and group home facilities requiring 24-hour vehicle accessibility are exempt from ITRC review. However, the Committee must be notified when the agency purchases vehicles for this use.
5. Not Consistent with the TDP: The agency is not providing client transportation as

specified in the approved TDP. This category also includes funding requests from agencies that operate in an area that does not have a Transportation Development Plan.

- (d) Funding Agency Notification. Upon adoption of a recommendation by Committee members present, the staff shall provide written notice of the Review Committee's recommendation to the funding agency within twenty-one (21) days of the Committee's action..
- (e) Notice of Funding Decision. The funding agency shall notify the Committee Chairman in writing within thirty (30) days as to the actual funding decision when the decision is not consistent with the ITRC recommendation.
- (f) Special Ballots. The Chairman shall have the authority to request written ballots from the Committee regarding recommendations on projects that cannot be considered in a timely manner at a regularly scheduled Committee meeting.

#### V. Special Considerations

##### (a) Vehicle Acquisitions

All capital requests must be consistent with the area's Transportation Development Plan. Priority funding is given to an agency that participates in the area's coordinated transportation system.

##### (b) Accessibility

Each applicant agency's transportation system shall be reviewed to determine that the system, when viewed in its entirety, is accessible to handicapped persons. This means that the system must operate a number of vehicles sufficient to provide generally equal service to handicapped persons as is provided to other persons.

If an approved Transportation Development Plan does not specify a ratio of handicapped accessible vehicles necessary to provide equal service, or a plan does not exist for the area, the Review Committee shall ensure that at least one (1) of every five (5) vehicles in the

transportation system is accessible to handicapped persons.

The Committee shall consider the "transportation system" as all providers and vehicles in the service area as potential participants in the coordinated/consolidated system, regardless of whether they are referenced in the Transportation Development Plan.

(c) Transportation Development Plans

State policy encourages the preparation of Transportation Development Plans at the local level. Additionally, state agencies are directed to provide priority funding to applicant agencies where the request for funds is consistent with an approved Transportation Development Plan.

State agencies may adopt the planning requirement as a prerequisite for receiving funds. (For example, the Public Transportation Division requires a plan for the Section 16(b)(2) and Section 18 programs.)

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 9  
NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

By the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of North Carolina it is ORDERED:

Section 1. There is hereby created and established the North Carolina Public Transportation Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will be composed of twenty-two members: one member from each of the fourteen highway divisions, five at large members, and the Secretary of the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Transportation. The Governor shall appoint nineteen lay members to serve at the pleasure of the Governor who shall represent a cross section of transportation interests. The Secretary of Transportation shall chair the Advisory Council.

Section 2. The Advisory Council shall have the following duties:

- (1) To review and make recommendations to the Interagency Transportation Review Committee concerning guidelines and criteria for the Review Committee;
- (2) To review and make recommendations to the funding agencies concerning project situations when there are unresolved problems between the Review Committee and the applicant or other local interests;
- (3) To advise and make recommendations to the Board of Transportation concerning public transportation policy and expenditures of state and federal funds for public transportation; and
- (4) To develop transportation policies which are consistent with promoting balanced economic growth.

Section 3. There is hereby created the North Carolina Interagency Transportation Review Committee. The Review Committee will be composed of Representatives from the Departments of Education, Human Resources, Natural Resources and Community Development, and Transportation. The Secretaries of the respective departments shall appoint a representative and an alternative from their departments who shall represent

each funding agency. The Director of the Public Transportation Division shall chair the Review Committee.

Section 4. The Review Committee shall have the following duties:

- (1) To implement policy and apply criteria as developed by the Advisory Council.
- (2) To provide written notice of recommendations based upon review of applications or plans to the appropriate state agency; and
- (3) To review all transportation components of applications or plans requesting transportation funding when the funds are administered by a state agency.

Section 5. The Department of Transportation shall provide the planning, technical, and administrative support for the Review Committee and Advisory Council.

Section 6. The Secretary of Transportation, after conferring with the appropriate departmental Secretaries, shall have the final authority on all transportation funding decisions.

Section 7. To further the objectives of this Executive Order, all departments and agencies under the Governor's Jurisdiction shall immediately draft directives and procedures necessary to implement these policies. Such drafts shall be submitted to the Secretary of Transportation for review and approval within 60 days of the signing of this Executive Order.

Section 8. Every agency within State Government within my authority is hereby directed to cooperate with the Council and Committee in providing all necessary information regarding their activities, and to disseminate the departmental directives and procedures within the agency which are necessary to implement this Executive Order.

Section 9. Executive Order Number 29, dated December 6, 1978 is hereby rescinded. All records of the North Carolina Public Transportation Advisory Council created pursuant to said executive order, are transferred to the Council created herein. The Council herein shall be the successor to the North Carolina Public Transportation Advisory Council.

Section 10. This Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until June 30, 1987, unless terminated earlier or extended by further Executive Order.

Done in the Capital City of Raleigh, North Carolina, this the twenty-eighth day of June, 1985.

James G. Martin  
Governor of North  
Carolina

ATTEST:

Thad Eure Secretary of State  
State of North Carolina

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**APPENDIX E: ADDENDUM FORM**

NORTH CAROLINA INTERAGENCY TRANSPORTATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Transportation Addendum—FY 19 \_\_\_\_\_

### State/Federal Administering Agency \_\_\_\_\_

#### I. General Information:

Legal Name of Applicant Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Applicant's Service Area (county(ies)) \_\_\_\_\_  
 What is your organization's primary function? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Status of Coordinated Countywide Transportation Planning:

Describe the agency's role in planning and coordination activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN (TDP) STATUS

- TDP in progress  
 TDP complete, approved by Department of Transportation  
 TDP complete, approved by Department of Transportation and County Commissioners

#### III. Population Groups Served:

- Elderly                       Physically handicapped (Approx % \_\_\_\_\_ )  
 Youth                         Mentally handicapped (Approx % \_\_\_\_\_ )  
 Public                        Economically deprived (low income)

#### IV. Services Accessed:

- Medical                     Employment  
 Day Care                  Recreation  
 Shopping                  Education or Training  
 Nutrition                  Other Social Services

#### V. Agency Operated Fleet:

	Number	Client Transportation Only		Lift Ramp	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Automobiles					
Station Wagons					
Vans					
Buses					
Total					
			Total No. of Lifts/Ramps		

For State Use Only (Reviewer Date \_\_\_\_\_)

**VI. Transportation Funding Sources**

Source	Federal	State	Local	Total
1.	\$	\$	\$	\$
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

\$

Total

**VII. Purchase of Service (Contracts and Vender Agreements)**

	Monthly Ridership	Monthly Vehicle Miles	Projected Expenditures
Taxi			\$
Intracity Bus			
Coordinated System			
Transportation Authority			
Other: Specify			

\$

Subtotal

**VIII. Operation of Own Transportation Service:**

**A. STAFF**

	Number	% of Time	Projected Expenditures
Administrative			\$
Drivers			
Professional			
Escorts			
Volunteers reimburse.		\$ /per mile	
Other: Specify			

\$

Subtotal

**B. PURCHASE OR LEASE OF VEHICLES AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT**

Vehicle Type	No. Leased	No. Purchased	Replacement	Expansion	Special Equipment	Cost
1.						
2.						
3.						

\$

Subtotal

**C. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM OPERATING COST**

	Projected Expenditures
1. Fuel and Oil	
2. Maintenance and Repair	
3. Insurance	
4. Licenses and fees	
5. Staff mileage reimbursement \$ /per mile	
6. Indirect cost or overhead	
7. Other: Specify	

\$

Subtotal

Total Transportation Program Expenditures \$

THESE TOTALS MUST AGREE



**APPENDIX F: NORTH CAROLINA'S ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED  
TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**GUIDELINES AND ALLOCATIONS BY COUNTY**



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
P. O. BOX 25201  
RALEIGH 27611-5201

JAMES G. MARTIN  
GOVERNOR

September 14, 1989

JAMES E. HARRINGTON  
SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM TO: County Managers  
FROM: Secretary James E. Harrington   
SUBJECT: Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program

The 1989 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$2,000,000 from the Department of Transportation Highway Fund for a new program called the Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program. Your county's allocation for FY 1989-90 is shown on the attached table.

The intent of this new program is to supplement sources of funds which are currently available and being used to provide transportation services to our elderly and handicapped citizens. Elderly is defined as sixty years of age or older. A handicapped individual is defined as one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life functions, who has a record of such impairment, or who is regarded as having such an impairment.

The major features of the program are as follows:

- (1) The funds will be distributed to counties according to a formula specified in the legislation. There is no local match requirement.
- (2) The funds are to be used to provide additional trips for elderly and handicapped individuals. Only those counties maintaining elderly and handicapped transportation services at a level consistent with those in place on January 1, 1989 will be eligible for those funds.
- (3) Before a county may receive its formula allocation, it must have completed a Transportation Development Plan (TDP). This TDP must have been approved by the County Commissioners and this Department, and the implementation steps called for in the plan must be accomplished. The services proposed under this program must be provided in a manner consistent with your plan. (If your TDP does not specifically address this funding program, the funds must be used to provide services similar to those already provided through the elderly and handicapped service agencies in your county.) Your county's lead transportation

agency will be receiving a letter from our Public Transportation Division in the next several days which will cover the status of your TDP.

- (4) The funds provided are not to be used to purchase or lease vehicles or to replace any funds currently being used to provide elderly and handicapped transportation services.
- (5) Certification of eligibility of elderly and handicapped is the responsibility of the county.
- (6) Funds that are not used in a given fiscal year (July-June) due to the lack of a TDP approved by the County Commissioners and the Department, will be re-distributed to the eligible counties based upon the distribution formula during the next fiscal year.

This operating assistance program represents a commitment by Governor Martin and the General Assembly to improve transportation services for our elderly and handicapped citizens. Generally, adequate vehicles are available in each county as our Department attempts to meet vehicle needs, as defined by a TDP, through available state and federal grant programs. These grant programs include the Section 16(b)(2) elderly and handicapped capital assistance program, the Section 18 rural and small urban transportation program, and the Section 9 urbanized area program. Again, the intent of this new elderly and handicapped program is to provide additional operating assistance.

I urge you to make the most of this program. The need for additional transportation services for the elderly and disabled is well-documented. Now it is up to you and your commissioners, working with human service agencies and interested citizens in your county, to identify the areas of greatest need and to distribute the funds earmarked for your county accordingly. We suggest using the group in your county which served as the steering committee for the development of your TDP, or your transportation advisory committee, to identify those individuals or programs with the greatest need and to make recommendations to the commissioners for the use of your county's funds.

The types of transportation which are most critical will vary from county to county but should include clients of the following agencies:

- (1) sheltered workshops
- (2) councils on aging (particularly those services related to maintaining the elderly in their own homes)
- (3) adult day care programs
- (4) programs provided by mental health agencies
- (5) vocational rehabilitation programs

(6) programs for the developmentally disabled.

Although the decisions regarding proper distribution of funds among these and other critical needs is purely local, we urge you to assure that your distribution is fair and equitable.

Successful applicants may receive funds at the beginning of the first month of the quarter during which the transportation will be provided. Funding for subsequent quarters will be available fifteen (15) days following receipt by our Public Transportation Division of the previous quarter's program report.

Applications will be accepted through October 13, 1989. Subsequent application dates for those counties which cannot meet the October 13 deadline will be announced later. County governments are the only eligible applicants for these funds. In order to apply for funding under the Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program, contact your regional transportation consultant (see the attached map) at (919)733-4713.

We are very pleased that this program is available. We look forward to working with you as we address the mobility needs of North Carolina's elderly and handicapped citizens.

JEH:dk

Attachments (2)

ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

COUNTY	TOTAL ALLOCATION	COUNTY	TOTAL ALLOCATION
ALAMANCE	\$ 26,903	JOHNSTON	23,086
ALEXANDER	14,156	JONES	14,754
ALLEGHANY	13,501	LEE	15,969
ANSON	15,802	LENOIR	19,928
ASHE	15,565	LINCOLN	16,776
AVERY	13,440	MACON	17,293
BEAUFORT	18,094	MADISON	16,271
BERTIE	15,779	MARTIN	14,289
BLADEN	17,246	MCDOWELL	15,393
BRUNSWICK	18,677	MECKLENBURG	62,109
BUNCOMBE	38,165	MITCHELL	14,090
BURKE	21,617	MONTGOMERY	15,347
CABARRUS	24,162	MOORE	20,308
CALDWELL	20,519	NASH	21,172
CAMDEN	13,482	NEW HANOVER	25,732
CARTERET	18,607	NORTHAMPTON	15,470
CASWELL	14,650	ONSLOW	20,943
CATAWBA	26,214	ORANGE	18,948
CHATHAM	16,577	PAMLICO	13,919
CHEROKEE	15,354	PASQUOTANK	14,834
CHOWAN	13,245	PENDER	16,304
CLAY	13,396	PERQUIMANS	13,269
CLEVELAND	23,558	PERSON	15,497
COLUMBUS	20,388	PITT	22,283
CRAVEN	20,644	POLK	14,074
CUMBERLAND	36,397	RANDOLPH	23,848
CURRITUCK	13,086	RICHMOND	19,000
DARE	14,060	ROBESON	26,738
DAVIDSON	27,220	ROCKINGHAM	24,532
DAVIE	14,387	ROWAN	28,833
DUPLIN	18,710	RUTHERFORD	19,936
DURHAM	31,731	SAMPSON	20,021
EDGECOMBE	18,808	SCOTLAND	15,436
FORSYTH	45,614	STANLY	19,009
FRANKLIN	16,383	STOKES	15,611
GASTON	34,273	SURRY	21,139
GATES	13,782	SWAIN	15,128
GRAHAM	13,890	TRANSYLVANIA	15,183
GRANVILLE	16,327	TYRRELL	17,099
GREENE	13,527	UNION	19,623
GUILFORD	54,519	VANCE	16,869
HALIFAX	20,878	WAKE	45,775
HARNETT	20,290	WARREN	14,734
HAYWOOD	19,583	WASHINGTON	13,711
HENDERSON	22,190	WATAUGA	14,645
HERTFORD	14,791	WAYNE	24,076
HOKE	14,120	WILKES	20,136
HYDE	17,834	WILSON	19,777
IREDELL	23,709	YADKIN	15,709
JACKSON	15,470	YANCEY	14,054
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>



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